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11. AN EXAMINATION OF THE HYPOTHESIS OF

in a recent Publication entitled *ΠΑΛΑΙΟΜΑΛΙΑ*, containing  
ing, in Epiphanius' *Test of the Three*, Greek  
Testimony, and a translation from the Latin, and illustrating  
the original text, and the text which is preserved in the Greek  
MS. of the *Apocryphal Writings*, and in the Works of the  
Greek Fathers collectively. With Observations illustrative of  
many Words of a Doctrinal Use employed by the Apostles  
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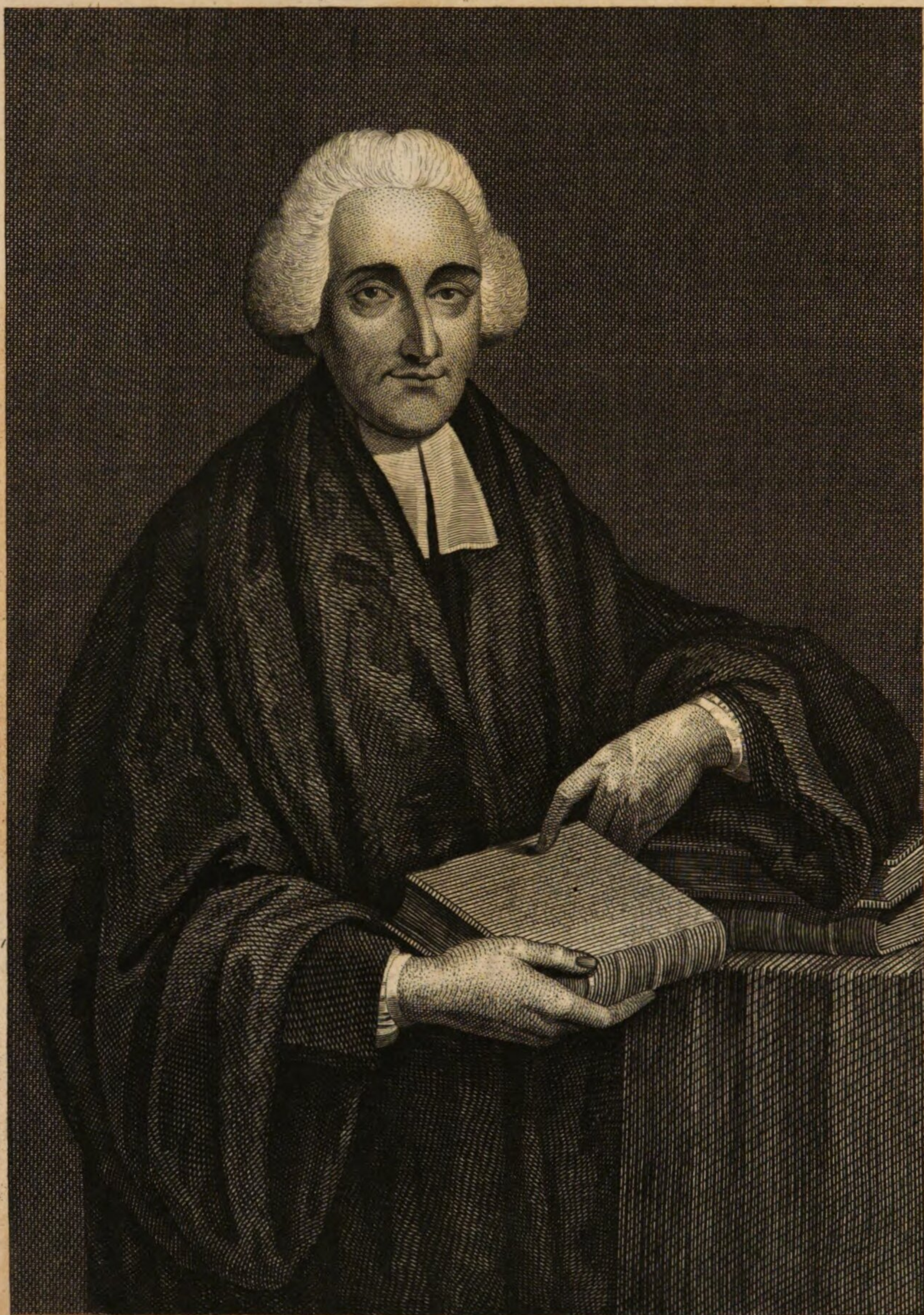
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AUGUSTUS TOPLADY A. B.

*Published as the Act directs 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1819, for W. Row  
Great Marlborough Street. And the rest of the Proprietors.*



MEMOIRS

OF

AUGUSTUS TOPLADY, A. B.

LATE VICAR OF BROAD HEMBURY, DEVON.

"He being dead yet speaketh.

THIRD EDITION,

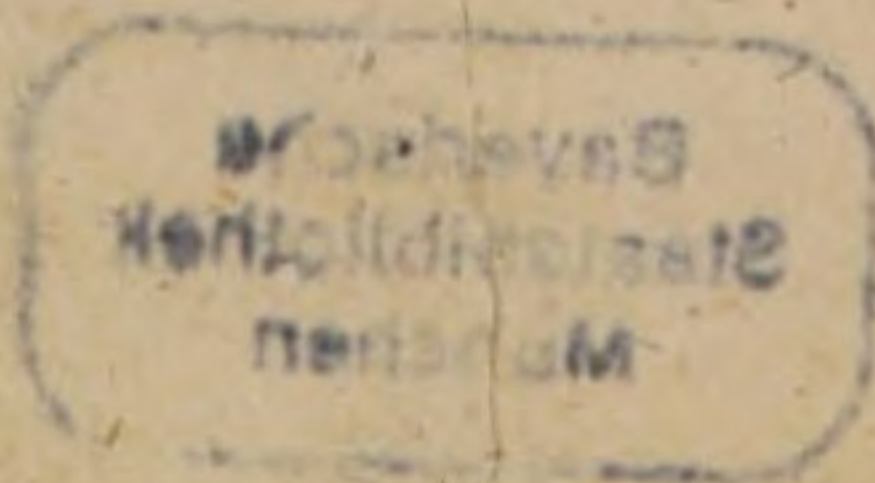
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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR AND SOLD BY W. ROW, GREAT MARLBOROUGH  
STREET.

1813.

[Price 4s. 6d. sewed, with a Portrait annexed.]





MEMOIRS

OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES

THE FIRST

BY

JOHN

WILKINS

ESQ. OF GREAT BRITAIN

AND

1813

Cox and Baylis, Printers, Great Queen Street  
Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, London.

Bayerische  
Staatsbibliothek  
München



## THE EDITOR

TO

## THE READER.

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Soon after Mr. Toplady's decease, many persons who loved his principles and revered his memory, expressed an earnest desire to have a complete edition of his works. Nothing, however, of the kind was attempted until fourteen years after his death, namely, in the year 1792, when the undertaking was finally determined upon ; materials were accordingly collected, and application made to some gentlemen of literary character and respectability, whose principles in some degree coincided with the author's, to undertake the arrangement for publication. They promised their assistance, but the conditions were found to be such as could not be assented to, without proving injurious to the work, and giving it an appearance of an imposition on the public. Apprehensive that the religious community would thus be deprived of a considerable part of the writings of a justly admired author, the editor was determined to proceed in the undertaking, however inadequate his abilities were, and disproportionate for the superintendence of such a task. He is satisfied with doing what no one would do, of securing from oblivion, a large portion of valuable com-



positions, and throws himself upon the candour of the public, without any studied or affected apologies.

It is proper to premise that the editor has nothing to do with the order of the clergy ; he is only a private solitary individual, prompted by no partial or pecuniary motives whatever ; he presents the memoirs of the author and his disquisitions, to the world from a thorough conviction, of the value of the memory of the worthy author, who was an ornament and an honour to the Christian profession, and whose writings are in unison with the truths of revelation. Indeed, few men have been so competent to stand forth for the honour of the inspired pages as Augustus Toplady. He was eminently set apart by the great head of the church, as a defender of those inestimable important truths revealed in Scripture, which the pride of the human heart naturally militates at. As a polemic divine, it must be confessed, he had every possible advantage, that a combination of powers, so rare and conspicuous, could afford. His imagination was fertile and brilliant, attended with a mature and sound judgment. He had a happy facility, in conveying his thoughts, in a language clear and simple, at the same time animated and grand ; always varying with the subject, and joining elegance to propriety, in a strain of affecting, but masculine writing, which enlightens the understanding and captivates the heart.

While the few years he resided on earth, he was a friend to truth, and an avowed enemy to error ; he was above dissimulation, and that exposed him to the attacks of bigotry. He died as he lived, exhibiting a magnanimity of spirit, which was never surpassed in



a dying hour, therein illustrating, that the principles he had embraced, were not only his comfort in life, but his support when the vital system was destroying.

The peculiar object in the writings of our much honoured friend, was to bring vital Christianity to view, and to display its principles defended with arguments drawn from the same source. His admirable pages are a masterly and consistent defence of the divine attributes, in unison with the writings of the Old and New Testament. For it will be self-evident to those who will only consider, that the perennial opposition made to the doctrines of discriminating grace, in the absolute love of the everlasting Father, proceeding forth from him in his beloved Son, and communicated to a peculiar people by the Holy Spirit, are the identical objections reiterated against the purposes of the Almighty, respecting the restriction of the volume of revelation.

It must be perceivable, that the very reception of the Scriptures among any people, cannot be supported but on the principles of our author. For the question has been asked, and often repeated, If the divine records are acknowledged to be “a light to them who sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death,” and a directory “to guide their feet in the paths of peace,” how is it to be accounted for, that millions of the inhabitants of the globe are without its saving and salutary influence? Taking a survey of human nature, what reason can be given that so many of our fellow-creatures are worshipping the idols of their imagination with obscene and barbarous rites, and others sunk into the very dregs of brutal voluptuousness?

Why



Why is the Vedam, the Zend-avesta, the Sadder, and the Alcoran, received and acknowledged with all their fanciful conjectures, and chronological chimeras, and the deposit of sacred writ, not so much as heard of in the midst of the rubbish of those absurdities ; and where the vivifying beams of revelation are displayed, as they are in this country, and at this period of time, how is it that the intellectual darkness of the mind is not dissipated so as to perceive its radiance? Who upon earth can give a satisfactory reason for these facts, or develope to the human mind the various dispensations of God, in denying or withholding the light of revelation, without resolving it into the divine will, and ultimately to take up the words of him who spake as never man did? “ Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight.”

These weighty investigations, which the importance of the subject brings under consideration, were some of the principal topics which employed the abilities of our author. From those who are not influenced by a saving knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, nothing is to be expected in the perusal of these writings, but the most inveterate opposition, hasty censure, and unbridled licence of declamation ; while those who are taught from above, cannot be brought to abandon a belief so full of enlivening consolations, and attested to their consciences by irrefragable documents, they will be induced to contemplate the inconceivable greatness, the inaccessible height, the unfathomable researches and unmeasurable extent of those heavenly excellencies, and exclaim with the apostle Paul, “ O the depth of the riches, both of the  
wisdom



wisdom and the knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.' While meditating in this preliminary state on these things, the thoughts will expand with an earnest desire to that eventful period, when a far nobler scene shall be opened, when this faint twilight shall be preceded with the blaze of an eternal day, and when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

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This new edition of the following sheets is now presented to the public with considerable enlargement, and as the editor is not a professional writer, he has to acknowledge his gratitude, and to make an avowal of his thanks, for that full latitude of forbearance which he has met with in the generous judgment of the discerning, which ever distinguishes the liberality of superior and general education.



*Lately published, Price 4s. in Boards,*

**THE  
BEAUTIES**

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**OF**

**DR. PORTEUS,**

**LATE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON.**

**WITH NOTES BY THE EDITOR.**

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Printed for W. Row, Great Marlborough Street.

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The above work is a valuable summary of the  
Evidences of the Christian Religion.



# MEMOIRS

OF THE

REV. AUGUSTUS TOPLADY, A. B.

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ON perusing the pages of biography, we find therein delineated the achievements of various persons exhibited to the world, according to the caprice and mutability of human opinion. But when we turn our views to the infallible leaves of inspiration, we discover a just discrimination of characters, with that mark of distinction stamped upon them from heaven, that stands in everlasting force, and admits of no exception. According to Scripture testimony, the righteous and the wicked are the only two classes that mankind are divided into: whatever becomes of the ungodly, the sacred records inform us, that it shall be well respecting the present and eternal prosperity of believers. For, "the foundation of the Lord," or his immoveable purpose respecting his people, "standeth sure, having this seal," this authentic and inviolable sanction, "The Lord knoweth," the Lord loves and will ever continue to take care of "them that are his."

We have many striking illustrations of the wonderful preservations experienced by the worthies of the Old and New Testaments: their whole history presents us with little else than a continued chain of miraculous providence. When God has had any particular employment for them to be engaged in, how suitably has he prepared and equipped his workmen for the work he has appointed them for. If, for example, we look at Elijah, we shall perceive a plain, blunt, honest prophet; a stranger to refinement, and to the blandishments of the world, but formed to speak of God's testimonies before princes,



without being ashamed. It was Elijah against all Israel, and all Israel against Elijah. "But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong, by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob." How eminently is this exemplified in the history of Isaiah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, and the apostle Paul, who were copiously furnished for that sphere of action unto which they were appointed.

If we descend from Jewish to modern times, many peculiar instances will occur to elucidate this remark. Luther had inflexible enemies to withstand, and he strove with them roughly. His nerves were like steel, his bow like iron, his voice like thunder, and the force of his pen has been compared to the weight of Hercules's club. He was destined to engage with dangers and fierce persecutions; and God armed him for the war accordingly. Calvin was a complete gentleman, and a polite scholar: his feelings were fine, and his nerves delicate. He was not appointed of God, for such hard public work as Luther: and, comparatively speaking, he met with little violent persecution during the course of his life.

In our own country, Mr. Whitfield was designed of God, to be the grand and honoured instrument of restoring the truths and the power of the gospel in England. He was therefore fitted for his employ. He feared the face neither of men nor devils. Like an eagle he flew from country to country, sounding intrepidly the gospel trumpet as he flew.

Mr. Hervey was not prepared, neither was he called to, the same dangerous and difficult department. The holy rector of Weston was formed more for study than for public action. It was his delight to cultivate the elegant parts of learning in retirement and obscurity, and to speak for Christ rather by his pen, than as an apostolic itinerant.

Mr. Toplady was peculiarly set apart to exhibit and defend the prominent features of revelation. He has pushed his adversaries with more inflexibility, intrepidity and vigour, than was ever done by any preceding

ing



ing champions. His animated warmth was justly proportioned to the cause he had espoused. The objections that have been reiterated against the doctrines of grace, appeared to have been collected into one focus, and held up to his view with an air of triumph, and with the confidence of certain victory, but under the divine auspices, and in the spirit of sincerity and truth, he was enabled to repel those attacks that were made against the bulwark of Christianity, in such a manner as almost to supersede any eulogium that can be passed upon his uncommon abilities.

The last illustrious character, who is the subject of these memoirs, was son of Richard Toplady, a major, who died at the siege of Carthagen, soon after his birth. His mother's maiden name was Catharine Bate. She was sister to the late Rev. Mr. Julia Bate, and the Rev. Mr. Bate, rector of St. Paul's, Deptford; by whom they were married at the above church, December 21, 1737. They had issue one son named Francis, who died in his infancy, and afterwards our author. He drew his first breath at Farnham, in Surrey, November the 4th, 1740. His godfathers were Augustus Middleton and Adolphus Montague, Esquires; in honour to whom he bore the Christian name of one, and the surname of the other. He received the first rudiments of his education at Westminster-school, where he early evinced and increased a peculiar genius. From his studies at that place, he accompanied his honoured parent in a journey to Ireland, to pursue claims to an estate which she had in that kingdom. Notwithstanding the solitary state in which his mother was left, she anxiously watched over him, with the deepest sympathy of affection, and persevered in a plan for his education, and future views in life, which were the principal concerns of her maternal solicitude. The son returned her tender care with the utmost affection. Indeed, so great was the obligation which he always conceived he owed her, that he never mentioned her, but in words expressive of sensibility and gratitude.

As this son of the prophets was improving those na-  
tural



tural talents he was so eminently endowed with, it pleased God in his providence, when he was about the age of sixteen, to direct his steps into a barn, at a place called Codymain, in Ireland, where a layman was preaching. The word of God, then delivering, was fixed upon his conscience, "in demonstration of the spirit and with power." Let it not rashly be deemed the enthusiasm of a visionist, or the *ignis fatuus* of religious distraction, when we assert, "That his faith did not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." There was nothing peculiar in the place or instrument to work upon the fancy or passions; therefore, for to attempt to explain the effect, by any logical or metaphysical investigation, would be ridiculous, while we have the Scriptures in congeniality with facts, to inform us that "it pleaseth God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe."

A few years after the above memorable circumstance, Mr. Toplady reflects upon it in the following words: "February 29, 1768, at night, after my return from Exeter, my desires were strongly drawn out, and drawn up to God. I could, indeed, say that I groaned with the groans of love, joy, and peace; but so it was, even with comfortable groans that cannot be uttered. That sweet text, Ephesians xi. 13, "Ye, who were sometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ," was particularly delightful and refreshing to my soul; and the more so, as it reminded me of the days and months that are past, even the day of my sensible espousals to the bridegroom of the elect. It was from that passage, that Mr. Morris preached on the memorable evening of my effectual call, by the grace of God, under the ministry of that dear messenger; and under that sermon, I was, I trust, brought nigh by the blood of Christ, in August, 1756.

"Strange that I, who had so long sat under the means of grace in England, should be brought nigh to God in an obscure part of Ireland, amidst an handful of God's people met together in a barn, and under the ministry of one who could hardly spell his name! Surely



ly it was the Lord's doing, and is marvellous ! The excellency of such power must be of God, and cannot be of man : the regenerating spirit breathes not only on whom, but likewise when, where, and as he listeth."

On the perusal of this event, no doubt but the sceptic will rage, the deist sneer, and the person who assumes the character of a rational Christian will contumaciously ask, how can these things be ? Rather we would wish to see such objectors, in a spirit of humility, fall prostrate before God, and intreat him to make them recipients of the grace of conversion, which bringeth salvation. For without this experience, real vital Christianity will appear futile and fallacious, and the divine records seem as volatile as the sybil leaves.

Our author early made it appear, that he was not afraid of literary labour ; the valuable years of his youth were devoted to useful and honourable studies, rather than in frivolous occupations, such as too often engross the minds of young men at his age. He laid a solid basis for future years, and the superstructure was beautiful. Between the age of fifteen and eighteen, by way of relaxation from his studies, he employed himself in writing little poetic pieces, which were printed in a 12mo. volume, at Dublin, in the year 1759. They are by no means deficient in spirit and force : some of the verses are truly poetical, and many of the thoughts new. Amidst the small inaccuracies of these juvenile compositions, there are indubitable marks of genius. The youth and inexperience of the writer must be looked upon as an extenuation, so as to preclude every idea of criticism. The ardour of piety and religion, which irradiated the morning of his life, were increased with lustre in his maturer years.

Richly replete with a variety of gifts, and divinely instructed into those doctrines requisite for a Christian and a minister, he received imposition of hands on Trinity Sunday, the 6th of June, 1762. He entered upon the ministerial function, not only as a scholar, and as one professing religion, but as an honest man. He mentions, that he subscribed to the articles, homilies,



and liturgy, five separate times, from principle; he did not believe them, because he subscribed them, but subscribed them, because he believed them. He was well persuaded, that after such an awful declaration made by every candidate for holy orders, the man that can draw back, or palliate, for any sinister purpose, the doctrines he has subscribed, so as to insinuate himself into the favour of men, to avoid persecution, or for any aggrandisement, must be devoid of every upright principle, and openly prove himself, an apostate from the Church, a traitor to the cause he once avowed, and a liar to the Holy Ghost.

Shortly after his initiation into the ministry, he was inducted into the living of Blagdon, in Somersetshire, which was procured by friends, in a manner very usual; but so scrupulous was he, when acquainted with the circumstance, that he was not easy until he had resigned it.

In the year 1768, he took possession of the vicarship of Broad Hembury, near Honiton, in Devonshire, which he held until his death. By the love and lenity he had to his people, the whole produce of the living did not amount to 80*l.* *per annum*.— He was by no means sedulous after temporal profits, or desirous of pursuing ecclesiastical preferments. It was his pre-eminence to merit the highest, and to be content with the lowest. In this situation he composed the greatest part of those writings, which will be esteemed and valued, while the genuine principles of Christianity continue to be revered.

To bring the reader more intimately acquainted with this excellent character, we shall insert a diary found in his manuscript papers, entitled “Short Memorials of God’s gracious Dealings, with my Soul, in a Way of spiritual Experience from Dec. 6, 1767,” with this motto, “Bethel visits ought to be remembered.” They contain an intense union of the most exalted sentiments in the engagement he was dedicated unto, and display the feelings of a soul in devout and ardent desires towards the Father of Spirits, unconnected with a heated imagination, or a stupid stoicism of devotion.

Sunday



Sunday, Dec. 6, 1767. In the morning read prayers and preached, here at Fen-Ottery, to a very attentive congregation. In the afternoon, the congregation at Harpford was exceeding numerous; and God enabled me to preach with great enlargement of mind and fervour. The doctrine did indeed seem to descend as the dew, and to be welcome as refreshing showers to the grass. O my Lord, let not my ministry be approved only, or tend to no more than conciliating the esteem and affections of my people to thy unworthy messenger; but do the work of thy grace upon their hearts: call in thy chosen; seal and edify thy regenerate; and command thy everlasting blessing on their souls! Save me from self-opinion, and from self-seeking; and may they cease from man and look solely to thee!

Monday, 7. Received a letter from Mr. Luce, and answered it. Gracious God, dispose of the event, to which it relates, as seemeth best to thee? Chuse thou my heritage and my lot! Let it be thy doing, not mine!

This afternoon I received a letter from my honoured mother, and my chest from London. It is a satisfaction to receive these presents and pledges of an earthly parent's love: but all the relations, and all the good things of this life, are less than nothing, and vanity, when compared with the love of Christ that passeth knowledge, and with one glimpse of thy special favour, O thou gracious Father of Spirits.

Tuesday, 8. Was much refreshed and sensibly comforted in the evening, while reading Dr. Gill's Sermon on the Death of Mr. Fall.

Wednesday, 9. A good deal of company dined here. How unprofitable are worldly interviews! Spent the evening much more advantageously in reading Dr. Gill's sermon on "The Watchman's Answer," and that great man's tract on final perseverance. Lord, grant me more and clearer evidences of my interest in that everlasting covenant, which is ordered in all things, and sure!

Thursday, 10. Heard that Mr. Duke has had a  
relapse



relapse into his fever. Pity, that so amiable a person in other respects should want the one thing needful! How much has he suffered, since I knew him, by drinking too freely, and how many narrow escapes has he had of his life. Yet, I fear, he goes on still, as an ox to the slaughter. "It hath set him on fire round about, yet he knows it not: it burneth him, yet he lays it not to heart." I bless God, who has enabled me to be faithful to the soul of my friend; and put it into my mind to write him that letter of remonstrance, from London, above a twelvemonth ago. But, alas! I have only delivered my own soul. Neither experience of present evils, nor the remonstrances of friends, will or can have any true effect on a sinner's heart, except thou, O Almighty Spirit, vouchsafe to reveal the arm of thy grace, and quicken the dead in sin, by the effectual working of thy glorious power. As overseer of this parish, I went down, in the morning, to view two of the poor-houses, and see what repair they want. Lord, what am I, that thou hast cast my lot in fairer ground, and given me a more goodly heritage! Surely, in a way of providence, no less than in a way of grace, thou hast made me to differ; and I have nothing which I did not receive from thee.

In the evening wrote to my mother. Some particulars, in her last letters to me, obliged me, in my answer, to make the following observations, among others: "God has fulfilled his promises to me, so often, and so many ways, that I think, if we could not trust his faithfulness and power, we should be doubly inexcusable. That he works by means, is certain; and I hope to try all that he puts into my hands. In the mean while, let us cast our care on him; and remember that he that believeth shall not make haste. There is one thing that pleases me much, about Broad-Hembury, and makes me hope for a blessing on the event, viz. that it was not, from first to last, of my own seeking: and every door, without any application of mine, has hitherto flown open, and all seems to point that way. As a good man somewhere says,  
"A be-



"A believer never yet carved for himself, but he cut his own fingers."—The all-wise God, whose never-failing providence ordereth every event, usually makes what we set our hearts upon unsatisfactory, and sweetens what we feared, bringing real evil out of seeming good; and real good out of seeming evil: to shew us what short-sighted creatures we are, and to teach us to live by faith upon his blessed self. If I should really exchange my present living, for Broad-Hembury, it will, I believe, be soon after Christmas. In the mean while add your prayers, that God himself would be pleased to chuse my heritage and fix my lot; command his gracious blessing on the event; turn the balance, as seemeth good in his sight; and make it entirely his own doing, not mine. Do not let your tenderness for me get the better of your confidence in God: a fault, I fear, too common, even with believing parents. Poor Mr. D. is relapsed, and his life is despaired of. Alas! what is wealth, with its usual attendants, the lust of the eye and the pride of life, when death stares us in the face! An interest in the covenant of grace is of more value than all the worlds God hath made. Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness, even the obedience, blood, and intercession of Christ, delivereth from the sting of temporal, and from the very possibility of suffering eternal death. In him may we be found, living and dying!"

In my chamber, before I went to bed, was much comforted while singing praise to the great Three-One, the author of all blessings I enjoy, and of all I hope for. I can testify, by sweet and repeated experience, that singing is an ordinance of God, and a means of grace. Lord, fit my soul to bear a part in that song for ever new, which the elect angels, and saints made perfect in glory, are now singing before the throne and before the Lamb!

Friday, 11. Rode to Broad-Hembury, on a visit to Mr. Luce, where I spent the day, and stopt all night. Before I went to bed, God was with me in private prayer.

Saturday, 12. After breakfast, left Broad-Hembury, and



and returned home to Fen-Ottery, taking Ottery St. Mary in my way, where I called on my friend Mr. Johnson. In the evening read bishop Newton on the Prophecies. At night was earnest with God in private prayer, for a blessing on my to-morrow's ministrations; and received an answer of peace. Lord, evermore increase my mental dependence on thy Holy Spirit. I am less than nothing, if less can be: and O! I am worse than nothing, for I am a vile sinner. But thou art infinitely gracious, and all power is thine.

Sunday, 13. The Lord was with me, both parts of the day. Water, O God, the souls that heard; and the seed of thy word, sown in weakness, do thou raise in power.

Between morning and afternoon service, read through Dr. Gill's excellent and nervous tract on predestination, against Wesley. How sweet is that blessed and glorious doctrine to the soul, when it is received through the channel of inward experience! I remember, a few years ago, Mr. Wesley said to me, concerning Dr. Gill, that "he is a positive man, and fights for his opinions through thick and thin." Let the doctor fight as he will, I am sure he fights to good purpose: and I believe it may be said of my learned friend, as it was of the duke of Marlborough, that he never fought a battle which he did not win.

Monday, 14. This morning, one William Towning, about nineteen years old, was bought here before Mr. Penny, for breaking open and robbing farmer Endicott's house yesterday afternoon, in time of service, while the family were at church. My honest parishioner, it seems, just before he went out, stept back into his room, he knew not why, and put away a considerable sum of money into a more secret place than where it had lain for some time past: by which means he was only robbed of little more than thirty shillings in money.

How evidently providential! Just before the unhappy young man was going off from Mr. Penny's for Exeter jail, his father, who had heard of his son's situation but an hour or two before, came up to the house with



with a look that too plainly declared the agonies of his heart. Unable to face his parent, the young man burst into tears, and retired into the orchard, whither his guard and his father followed him. Lord, if it be consistent with the counsel of thy will, be the comforter and the salvation of this sinner and his afflicted family. Bad as he is, thy grace can melt him down. By nature, I am as vile as he: yet I am, I trust, a monument of mercy, and a trophy of thy redeeming power. Blessed be the Lord, my New-creator! blessed be the Lord, my faithful keeper! On all occasions of this sort, I would recollect that excellent line,

“ Aut sumus, aut fuimus, vel possumus esse, quod hic est.”

Before I came out of my chamber to-day, I was too hasty and short in private prayer. My conscience told me so at the time; and yet, such was my ingratitude and my folly, that I nevertheless restrained prayer before God. In the course of the day, I had great reasons to repent of my first sin, by being permitted to fall into another. It is just, O Lord, that thou shouldst withdraw thy presence from one who waited so carelessly on thee. May I never more, on any pretext whatever, rob thee (or rather, deprive my own soul) of thy due worship; but make all things else give way to communion with thee!

The Lord, however, was pleased, in a few hours, sensibly to heal my backsliding; and open the intercourse of love between himself and me. I never so feelingly wonder at my own depravity, nor so deeply abhor myself, as when the fire of divine love warms my heart, and the out-pourings of God's spirit enliven my soul. Surely, the knowledge of salvation is the most powerful incentive to repentance; and not only the most prevailing, but an absolutely irresistible motive to universal holiness!

Began Le Clerc's "*Ars Critica*," a most learned, and, in many respects, useful performance: yet sadly interlarded with scepticism and profaneness. God keep me from being a mere scholar. As a specimen of this learned Frenchman's religion, I transcribe the following



ing passages, from that part of his book I have hitherto read. Page 52, “*——— In N. T. omnia ferè pietatis officia, sacrificii nomine, interdum indigitantur. Mors Christi sacrificium quoque vocatur, quòd fuerit præcipua ejus pietatis pars; & quædam habeat sacrificiis similia.*” Page 106, “*Religio Christiana non est ità cælo integra delapsa, ut nullam rationem habeat religionum, quæ antea erant; sed omnia nova hominibus afferat: contra est veluti religionis Judaicæ surculus, at ipso trunco major ac viridior:*” which latter clause is no more than a cold, paltry compliment, added, I suppose, to qualify in some measure, the rudeness of what goes before. But, surely, primitive Judaism and Christianity are not two religions; but one and the same religion, under two different dispensations. Page 122, he positively asserts, that there are very many things in the Old Testament, “*quæ intelligi nequeunt:*” for proof of which, he assigns six reasons, but such as even I, with my little knowledge, can see through the fallacy of, and, to my own satisfaction, at least, refute. Page 125, he does, in fact, deny that Hebrew can be understood at all, with certainty. Some Jews, says he, did, about a thousand years after Christ, begin to compose Grammars, and Commentaries on Scripture. “*Sed quum quicquid Judæi recentiores dixerunt hanc in rem, nitatur vel autoritate Massoretharum, vel veteribus versionibus, vel eorum conjecturis; necesse est eos*” [i. e. the Christian writers] “*non minùs fluctuare ac cæteros interpretes. Massorethæ enim—Menda sui codices consecrârunt.*” The preceding part of the citation represents the language itself as hardly intelligible: but the latter is such an home thrust at the Scriptures, as, I am apt to think, never fell from the pen of any other writer that called himself a Christian. Presently after, he tells us, that the Samaritan Pentateuch is preferable to the Hebrew; as being free from many smaller blunders, with which the latter “*passim, every where,*” abounds. He ranks it among Rabbinical conjectures, to suppose “*Codicem hodiernum carere mendis, [&] linguam Hebraicam perfectissimam*



*perfectissimam esse.*" Page 126, he falls foul on Grammars and Lexicons, as things in which very little confidence can be reposed: adding, by way of crown to all the rest, "*Itaque fatendum est, eum conari* *ἡεδὴν περὶ αὐτὴν μέγα κύμα θαλάσσης, qui sperat se, subsidiis memoratis*" [namely, the Hebrew Scripture itself; all commentators, whether Jewish or Christian: and all Grammars, Lexicons, &c.] "*adjutum, mediocrem adepturum cognitionem linguæ Hebraicæ.*" If so, farewell to all knowledge, not only of the Hebrew, but of every dead language whatever. Even Lexicons and Grammars are not to be trusted. But is not this the very quintessence of scepticism? And should not such a critic, with all his pomp of literature, be hissed out of the learned world? I mean, so far as he endeavours to sap the foundation of learning itself, and (which will always, in some measure, stand or fall with it) sound religion? Yet this is the writer, whose theological works (which I never desire to see) were so strenuously recommended to me, some years ago, by my friend, the present bishop of Clogher! *Dr Garnet*

Friday, 18. Rode to Honiton; when I bought Whitty's Sermons, the excellent professor Walæus's Works, and two volumes of the Cripplegate Lectures. In the evening, on my return to Fen-Ottery, had some short, but sweet rays of comfort from above.

Saturday, 19. Was afflicted with wanderings in private prayer. Lord, melt down my icy heart, and grant me to wait upon thee *αδιασπαστως*. O when, to use the language of the seraphic Mr. Hervey, will my devotions be no longer "like the motes, which fluctuate to and fro in the air, without any vigorous impulse or certain aim; but like the arrow, which springs from the strained bow, and, quick as lightning, flies to the mark!" My God, I want the *δενσις ενεργημενη*, the inwrought prayer (as Mr. Hervey justly translates James v. 16.), the prayer of the heart, wrought in the soul by the Holy Ghost.

Sunday, 20. Was indisposed, the former part of the day. Read prayers and preached, in the morning but languidly



languidly. In the afternoon, God renewed my strength: and I read prayers and preached, at Harpford, with much freedom of soul, to an exceeding large congregation. O the difference, the inexpressible difference, between enjoying God's presence, and pining in absence! This day my soul has been like a chariot without wheels, and afterwards mounted as on eagle's wings. Blessed be God, for tempering distress with joy! Too much of the former might weigh me quite down; too much of the latter might exalt me above measure. It is wisely and kindly done, O God, to give me a taste of both.

Monday, 21. In the morning, married John Court and Susannah Carter, at Harpford. On my return hither, spent the after part of the day, reading the late Mr. Whitty's Sermons; not without some sensible comfort and joy in the Holy Ghost: yet, evangelical as the matter of these discourses is, the style in which they are written will not suffer me to think that the worthy author himself ever intended them for publication. It is a pity, but the editor had first let them pass under the file of some able friend. Nevertheless, the inaccuracies of composition are greatly over-balanced by the sweet savour of that precious name and adorable grace, which, to the believing soul, are as ointment poured forth.

Tuesday, 22. All day within. The former part of it I was considerably out of order, and experienced something of what it is to have a body without health, and a soul without comfort. But, while I was musing, the fire kindled, and the light of God's countenance shone within. I found a particular blessing in reading Mr. Mayo's Sermon (Morning Exercises, vol. iv. Serm. iv.) on our "deliverance by Christ from the fear of death," Heb. ii. 15. Several things, in that choice discourse, struck me much; among the rest, the observations that follow: "The apostle says, 1 Thess. iv. 14. that Jesus died; but that the saints sleep in him: the reason why the phrase is varied is, because he sustained death with all its terrors, so that it might become



come a calm and quiet sleep to the saints."—Satan desired to have Peter, that he might sift him as wheat. And with what did he sift and shake him? Why, it was with the fear of death. Peter was afraid they would deal with him as they were dealing with his master. It was his slavish fear of death, that made him deny Christ: but anon, he recovered himself, and got above this fear. How came this about? 'Twas by means of faith. Christ had prayed for him, that his faith should not fail. It may be said of those who are fearful of death, that they are of little faith."—"It is usual with God to give his people some clusters of the grapes of Canaan, here in the wilderness: to give them some drops of that new wine, which they shall drink in the kingdom of their Father. This sets them a longing to have their fill thereof: even as the Gauls, when they had tasted the wines of Italy, were not satisfied to have those wines brought to them, but would go to possess the land where the vines grew."

In the afternoon my indisposition was, in great measure, removed. Surely the shedding abroad of divine love in the heart, and a good hope through grace, frequently conduce as much to the health of the body, as to health of soul. This is not the first time I have found it so.

Thursday, 24. My faith was weak, and my comfort small, this whole day; especially in the evening.

Yet this is my rock of dependence, that the foundation of the Lord standeth sure; his love is unchangeable; his purpose according to election cannot be overthrown; his covenant is from everlasting to everlasting, and he girdeth me when I know it not.

Friday, 25. Read prayers, preached and administered the holy sacrament, here at Fen-Ottery, in the morning.—Farmer T——e (whom I happened to meet at Miktam, no longer ago than last Wednesday evening, so drunk that he could hardly sit on his horse) presented himself at the Lord's table, with the rest of the communicants: but I passed him by; not daring to administer the symbols of my Saviour's body and blood



blood to one who had lately crucified him afresh, and had given no proof of repentance. He appeared surprised and abashed. Lord, make this denial of the outward visible sign, a means of inward and spiritual grace to his soul!—In the afternoon read prayers and preached to a very large congregation at Harpford. Drank tea at Farmer Carter's. Spent part of the evening, at Mr. Leigh's, at Hayne. From thence returned home, to Fen Ottery.—A day of most intense cold.

I would observe, that I have, through the blessing of God, been perfectly well through this whole day, both as to health, strength, and spirits; and gone through my church duties with the utmost ease, freedom, and pleasure; yet I have experienced nothing of that spiritual comfort and joy, which I sometimes do. A demonstration this, that they are prodigiously wide of the mark, who think that what believers know to be the joys of the Holy Ghost, are, in fact, no other than certain pleasing sensations, arising from a brisk circulation of the blood, and a lively flow of the animal spirits. In this light, the consolations of God are considered by those who never experienced them. But if what the regenerate declare to be the sweetness of divine fellowship, is, in reality, no more than, what the cold formalist imagines, the mere result *ευεξίας σωματικής*; it would follow, that every person, when in full health and spirits, actually enjoys that inward complacency and sweetness. But this is very far from being the case. I myself am a witness, that spiritual comforts are sometimes highest, when bodily health, strength, and spirits are at the lowest; and when bodily health, strength, and spirits are at the highest, spiritual comforts are sometimes at the lowest; nay, clear gone, and totally absent. Whence I conclude, that the sensible effusion of divine love in the soul, is superior to, independent of, and distinct from, bodily health, strength, and spirits. These may be, where that is not; and *vice versa*.

At night in my chamber, God was with me in my private waiting upon him; and I could, indeed, say,  
from



from an heart-felt sense of his love, that it is good for me to draw nigh unto the Lord. Thy visitation, sweet Jesus, is the life and joy of my spirit.

Saturday, 26. Gave Dr. Gill's Tract on Justification, another reading: not without much edification and comfort. I do think, that this great man's arguments for the proper eternity of this blessing, *ex parte Dei*, are unanswerable. Glory be to thee, O Lord, for my sense of special interest in thy everlasting love! Were all the treasures of ten thousand worlds displayed to my view, the sight of them, the mere sight, would not make me the richer nor the happier: it is the knowledge of peculiar property in any blessing, that felicitates the soul. In this the comfort lies. And, thanks to divine grace, I can look upon all the unsearchable riches of Christ, as my own. Lord, increase my faith, and add to my thankfulness, more and more.

Sunday, 27. In the morning, read prayers and preached at Harpford; to a congregation tolerably large, and very attentive. Afterwards, administered the Lord's Supper to some who appeared truly devout communicants. It was indeed an ordinance of love to my own soul. I experienced the favour and presence of God. I sat under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was pleasant to my taste.

In the afternoon read prayers, and preached, with great liberty and enlargement of mind, here at Fen-Ottery. My subject was Acts xiii. 39. The Sermon itself (excepting a few additions here and there) was what I had formerly wrote in Ireland, in the year 1760, a little before I quitted college. I can never be sufficiently thankful, that my religious principles were all fixed, long before I ever entered into orders. Through the good hand of my God upon me, I sat out in the ministry with clear gospel light from the first: a blessing not vouchsafed to every one. Many an evangelical minister has found himself obliged to retract and unsay what he had taught before in the days of his ignorance. Lord, how is it that I have been so signally favoured of thee! O keep me to the end, stedfast in thy truths.



Let me but go on experimentally and sensibly to know thee; and then it will be absolutely impossible for me to depart from the precious doctrines of grace: my early insight into which, I look upon as one of the distinguishing blessings of my life.

In the evening, received a letter from Mr. Andrew Lacam, of London; wherein he gives me this account of his late sister, Mrs. Carter, who died last month: "She had, for some time, left the fountain of living waters. I had two different conferences with her during her illness. I assured her, that I did not come to lord it over her; but, in love to her soul, put the question, how stand matters between God and you? Her attestation was, with sighs and tears, as follows: I am truly sensible, that I have run away from God; and it is my heart's burthen. But it is written in God's word, Whoso cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. I will, therefore, upon his promise, venture to cast my soul, without reserve, upon Jesus Christ: and there I am sure I can never perish. Upon this, we went to prayer," &c.

I could not forbear answering my friend's letter, almost as soon as I received it; and, among other things, observed to him as follows:

"The account you give of dear Mrs. Carter's decease, is a ground for hope in Israel concerning her. It is a great and blessed thing, when we are enabled to cast ourselves on the promises. It cannot possibly be done, without faith: and he that believeth shall be saved. Adored be the free grace of God, which, I trust, healed the backslidings of your sister, and brought her again within the bond of the covenant. His spirit alone can drive the ploughshare of penitential conviction through a sinner's heart; and give us to mourn at the spiritual sight of him whom our sins have pierced. The Lord give us to mourn more and more, until we have mourned away our unbelief, our carelessness, and hardness of heart! The soul, I verily believe, is never safer, than when, with returning Mary, we stand at the feet of Christ, behind him, weeping. I read lately  
of



of a minister in the last century, whose departing words were, A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Nor can I think such a state to be at all inferior, in point of real safety, to that of a good man who died a few years ago in London, with these triumphant words in his mouth, Now, angels, do your office.—Of some, it is written, “They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them :” while others of the Lord’s people enter the haven of everlasting life, as it were, with full sails and flying colours : they “return with singing unto Zion.” But this is our comfort, that of all whom the Father gave to Christ, he will not lose one. However the joy of faith may decline, the grace itself shall never totally fail ; having, for its security, the Father’s covenant-love, which is from everlasting to everlasting ; the blessed Mediator’s intercession, which is perpetual and all-prevailing ; and the faithfulness of the Holy Ghost, who when once given, is a fountain of living water, springing up in the believer’s heart to life eternal. May he, in all his plenitude of saving grace and heavenly love, descend upon our souls as dew, and make us glad with the light of his countenance !—When I consider the goodness of God to me the chief of sinners, I am astonished at the coldness of my gratitude and the smallness of my love. Yet, little and cold as it is, even that is his gift, and the work of his spirit. An earnest, I cannot doubt, of more and greater. The Lord Jesus increase the spark to a flame, and make the little one become a thousand !—My health, after which you are so kind as to enquire, was never better. And, which is greater still, I often experience the peace that passeth all understanding, and the joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. Not that I am always upon the Mount. There are seasons, in which my Lord is “as one that hideth himself.” But he only hides himself. He never forsakes the sinner he has loved. And blessed be his name, he has engaged that the regenerate soul shall never totally forsake him : else, there would never be a saint in heaven.—I rejoice to hear of Mrs. W’s temporal welfare ; and pray God



to make her, spiritually, such as he would have her to be. She and I have much chaff, to be burnt up; much tin, to be consumed; may the blood of the Lamb be upon us both, for pardon; and the sacred spirit be to us as a refining fire, for sanctification. If you write to her, do present the captain and her with my Christian respects: and let her know from me, that except she comes to Christ, as a poor sinner, with the halter of self-abasement round her neck, and the empty vessel of faith in her hand; as a condemned criminal, who has nothing to plead, and as an insolvent debtor, who has nothing to pay; she is stout-hearted, and far from righteousness. The way to be filled with the fulness of God, is to bring no money in our sack's mouth.— If you see my old friend, Mr. I. tell him, that he will not be able to find any rest for the sole of his foot, until he returns to the doctrines of grace, and flies back to the ark of God's election."

Tuesday, 29. At night, before I betook myself to rest, I was enabled to act faith very strongly on the promises. It was as if I had held a conversation with God. He assured me of his faithfulness, and I trusted him. It was whispered to my soul, "Thou shalt find me faithful:" my soul answered, "Lord, I believe it: I take thee at thy word." This, I am certain, was more than fancy. It was too sweet, too clear, and too powerful, to be the daughter of imagination. There was a *nescio quid divini*, attended with joy unspeakable, as much superior to all the sensations excited by earthly comforts, as the heavens are higher than the earth. Besides, in my experiences of this kind, when under the immediate light of God's presence within, my soul is in great measure passive, and lies open to the beams of the sun of righteousness. The acts of faith, love, and spiritual aspiration, are subsequent to, and occasioned by, this unutterable reception of divine influence. I bless my God, I know his inward voice; the still, small whisper of his good Spirit: and can distinguish it from every other suggestion whatever. Lord,



Lord, evermore give me this bread to eat, which the world knoweth not of!

Wednesday, 30. Held my tythe dinner at Harpford. The greater part of both parishes attended: they seemed greatly satisfied; and I had as much reason to be satisfied with them. Busy as I was myself, in receiving my dues, and numerous as the company was, Mr. Powell, of Ottery (who made one), and myself, had several opportunities of conversing on the best subjects, particularly the decrees of God, and the spiritual impotence of man's will.

Paid farmer Carter for four bushels of wheat, to be distributed among the poor, as follows: John Churchill, Robert Bishop, Henry Wilson, James Bedford, jun. Joseph Westcoat, John Way, Sarah Hare, John Churchill of Southertown; Charles Redwood, Patience Hall, William Perry, William May, jun. Elias Tews, Richard Haddon, and Richard House, one peck each; and half a peck each, to Elizabeth Critchard, and William May, senior.

Before I went to bed, God gave me such sense of his love as came but little short of full assurance. Who am I, O Lord? The weakest, and the vilest, of all thy called ones: not only the least of saints, but the chief of sinners. But though a sinner, yet sanctified in part, by the Holy Ghost given unto me. I should wrong the work of his grace upon my heart, was I to deny my regeneration: but, Lord, I wish for a nearer conformity to thy image. My shortcomings and my misdoings, my unbelief and want of love, would sink me into the nethermost hell, was not Jesus my righteousness and my redemption. There is no sin which I should not commit, was not Jesus, by the power of his spirit, my sanctification. O when shall I resemble him quite, and have all the mind that was in him? When I see him face to face: which God will hasten in his time.

Thursday, 31. All day within, reading. The thought of how many acquaintances I have lost by death, within the course of this year, dwelt with great weight upon my mind. The following persons are some of



them : Rev. Mr. Piers, (rector of Killishee, in Ireland ;) Sir Robert Long, Lord Tavistock, Rev. Mr. William Anderson, Mr. Davis, of Hatton-garden ; my aunt Bate, at Deptford ; Archdeacon Potter, Mrs. Cox, Mrs. Carter, Mr. Warner, Mr. Benjamin Jones, Mrs. Weare, Mr. Powell, jun. of Dublin : Mr. Unwin. And yet I am spared ! Lord, may it be for good, and not for evil ! There are, that I know of, but two things worth living for ; 1. To further the cause of God, and thereby glorify him before the world : 2. To do good to the souls and bodies of men.

Upon a review of the past year, I desire to confess, that my unfruitfulness has been exceeding great ; my sins still greater : and God's mercies, greater than both. It is now between eleven and twelve at night : nor can I conclude the year more suitably to the present frame of my own mind, than with the following verse from one of my hymns ; which expresses both my sense of past, and my humble dependence on divine goodness for future favours ;

Kind author, and ground, of my hope,  
Thee, thee for my God I avow ;  
My glad Ebenezer set up,  
And own thou hast help'd me 'till now :  
I muse on the years that are past,  
Wherein my defence thou hast prov'd ;  
Nor wilt thou abandon at last  
A sinner so signally lov'd.

Saturday, January 2, 1768. In the afternoon, called on William Perry, of Southertown. Our discourse happened to take a serious turn. Among other subjects, we spoke concerning the divinity of the ever blessed Son of God. I could scarce help smiling, at the same time that I heartily applauded the honest zeal of my well-meaning parishioner : " Let any man," said he, " but search the Scriptures, and if he does not find that Christ, as a divine person, subsisted, not only previous to his birth of the Virgin Mary, but from everlasting, I will lose my head." This brought to my mind that just observation of the late excellent Mr. Hervey ; who, speaking of Christ's atonement, says ;  
" Ask



“Ask any of your serious tenants, what ideas arise in their minds, upon a perusal of the fore-mentioned texts? I dare venture that, artless and unimproved as their understandings are, they will not hesitate for an answer. They will neither complain of obscurity, nor ask the assistance of learning : but will immediately discern in all these passages, a gracious Redeemer suffering in their stead ; and by his bitter, but expiatory passion, procuring the pardon of their sins. Nay, farther, as they are not accustomed to the finesses of criticism, I apprehend they will be at a loss to conceive how it is possible to understand such passages in any other sense.”

Sunday, 3. Read prayers and preached, in the morning, here at Fen-Ottery ; and, in the afternoon, at Harpford, to a very large congregation, considering the quantity of snow that lies on the ground, and the intenseness of the frost, which render it almost equally unsafe to walk or ride. I opened the ministrations of this year, with that grateful acknowledgement of the apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 10. “By the grace of God I am what I am :” which was my thesis, both parts of the day. My liberty, both of spirit and utterance, was very great in the afternoon. Looking on my watch, I was surprised to find that I had detained my dear people three quarters of an hour : and yet, when I concluded, they seemed unwilling to rise from their seats ; notwithstanding the unusual intenseness of the cold. Lord of hosts, who hast all hearts in thy hand, work in my hearers both to be, to will, and to do, of thy good pleasure !

This dreadfully-severe weather continuing, I ordered two more bushels of wheat to be distributed as follows : to ——— Hooper, James Blackmore, John Stanford, Elizabeth Woodrow, Grace Mitchell, and Martha Ham, one peck each ; and to John Trimlett, two pecks.

Saturday, 9. This evening I felt unusual diffidence in myself, about the performance of to-morrow's duty. Free (blessed be God) from fightings without, I yet had fears within. I besought the Lord to manifest his



strength in my weakness ; and these precious words were returned, with unutterable power and sweetness, to my soul, " Trust in the Lord Jehovah, for in him is everlasting strength." I was instantly enabled to cast myself, with perfect acquiescence, on the message from heaven : which, though delivered as an exhortation, is, in effect, a most glorious and comfortable promise. My doubts ceased ; my misgivings vanished away ; and I was assured that God would certainly give me a supply of sabbath-day strength for a sabbath-day's work.

Sunday, 10. Found God faithful to his word. Great was my strength, both morning and afternoon ; nor less the liveliness of my soul in preaching.

Received a letter from my honoured mother. The same person who brought it, brought me likewise two London newspapers ; which I hope to read to-morrow ; but dare not do on God's day. After evening service, visited and prayed with William May, sen. His cry was, " What shall I do to be saved ?" But I could not, on close conversation with him, discover the least sign of evangelical repentance. He neither sees the vileness of his heart, nor knows his need of Christ. Lord, bless what I was enabled to speak, and do that work upon his soul, which man cannot ! One of the most difficult and discouraging parts of the ministry, I have long found, is, visiting the ignorant and unawakened sick. But nothing is too hard for God. He, whose grace wrought on me, is able to work on the sinner I have been with to-day ; and will assuredly, if his name is in the Book of Life. Amidst all our discouragements in ministering to others, and amidst all our doubts respecting ourselves, there is yet a foundation, both sure and stedfast, even the rock of God's eternal election. Was it not for this, how would my hands hang down ! and what hope could I have for myself or others ? But this sets all to rights. The unchangeable Jehovah knows his own people by name, and will, at the appointed season, lead them, out of a state of nature, into a state of grace, by effectual vocation : for " whom he did predestinate, them he also called." This is all my salvation, and all my  
my



my desire: the ground of the former, and the object of the latter. At night, God was very gracious to me, in secret prayer. Great was my joy in the Lord; sweet my communion, and free my access. O that I had but something to render him for all his benefits! Just before I went to bed, that blessed promise was whispered powerfully to my soul, and sensibly sealed upon my heart, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Amen, Lord Jesus.

Tuesday, 12. In the afternoon, read Dr. Calamy's Account of the Ejected Ministers. What a blow to vital religion, to the Protestant interest in general, and to the Church of England herself, was the fatal extinguishment of so many burning and shining lights! But they are now where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest.

Thursday, 14. Was greatly edified and comforted in reading Mr. Lee's choice sermon on "Secret Prayer," from Matth. vi. 6. in the Supplement to the Morning Exercise at Cripplegate; sermon 14. How sweet are the following remarks, among many others! "At the great day, secret prayers shall have open and public answers."

"We halt, like Jacob, both in and after our strongest wrestlings.

"I may term secret prayer, the invisible light of the soul in the bosom of God. Out of this heavenly closet rises Jacob's ladder, whose rounds are all of light: its foot stands upon the basis of the covenant in thy heart; its top reaches the throne of grace.

"A weeping countenance, and a wounded spirit, are most beautiful prospects to the eye of heaven; when a broken heart pours out repenting tears, like streams from the rock, smitten by the rod of Moses's law in the hand of a mediator.

"It was an ingenious passage of Chrysostom, concerning the woman of Canaan, φιλοσοφει ἡ γυνή, the poor distressed creature was turned an acute philosopher with Christ, and disputed the mercy from him. O it is a blessed thing to attain to this heavenly philosophy of



of prayer, and to argue blessings out of the hand of God. The soul, like Jacob, does *in arenam descendere*, enter the lists with omnipotency, and, by holy force, obtain the blessing.

“ When the sweet incense of Christ’s prayer ascends before the Father, our prayers become sweet and amiable, and cause a savour of rest with God. This I take to be one reason why the prevalency of prayer is so often assigned to the time of the evening sacrifice; as pointing at the death of Christ, which was about the ninth hour of the day, near the time of the evening oblation. Hence Abraham’s sacrifice received a gracious answer; being offered about the going down of the sun: Isaac went out to pray at eventide: Elijah, at Mount Carmel, prayed and offered at the time of the evening sacrifice: Ezra fell on his knees, and spread out his hands, at the evening sacrifice, David begs that his prayer might avail, by the power of the evening sacrifice: Daniel, in prayer, was touched by the angel, about the time of the evening oblation. All, to show the prevalency of our access to the throne of grace, by the powerful merit of Christ’s intercession, who was the acceptable evening sacrifice.

“ The holy motions upon the hearts of saints, in prayer, are the fruits of God’s unchangeable decrees of love to them, and the appointed ushers of mercy: he graciously determines to give a praying, arguing, warm, affectionate frame, as the *prodromus*, or forerunner of some decreed mercy.

“ Prayer is that intelligible chain, that draws the soul up to God, and draws mercy down to us; or like the cable, which draws the ship to land, though the shore itself remain immoveable:” intimating that the saints do not pray, with a view to make God, who is unchangeable, reverse any of his decrees; but, 1. To draw their own souls into near communion with him; and, 2. As one appointed means, in and through which God is pleased to bestow the blessings to which his people are predestinated. The excellent man goes on:

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“We must gradually be acquainted with all the Three [persons of the Trinity]: first with the Spirit; then, with Christ; and, last, with the Father. First, God sends the Spirit of his Son into our hearts; and, then, through the Son we cry, Abba, Father. The Father chose us in Christ; and sends his Spirit to draw us to Christ; and, by Christ, to himself. Have ye this access to God, by the spirit? Bosom-communion flows from bosom-affection.

“A godly man prays in finding seasons. There are special seasons of drawing nigh to God; when he draws nigh to us: when the beloved looks forth at the window, and shews himself through the lattice, Cant. ii. 9. That is a time of grace, when he knocks at the door of thy heart, by his spirit. Motions of the heart [toward Christ] are like the doves of the east, sent with letters about their necks. It was said of Bernard, *Ex motu cordis, spiritus sancti præsentiam agnoscebat*; he knew when the Holy Spirit was present with him, by the motion of his heart.

“When thou canst discern the print of the broad seal of the covenant upon thy heart; and the privy seal of the Spirit upon thy prayers; and canst look upon the Son in the sacerdotal relation to thee; thou mayst come boldly, &c.

“As Gerson says, *Sequitur lacrymosa devotio flante spiritu sancto*: devout tears drop down from the Spirit’s influence: melting supplications follow the Holy Spirit’s gracious infusions.

“As the seaman, when he has set sail, goes to the helm and the compass, and sits still, and observes the sun, or the polar star, and how the ship works, and whether the land-marks form themselves aright according to his chart; so do you, when you have been at prayer: mark your ship, how it makes the port; and what rich goods are laden back again from heaven. Most people lose their prayers, in the mist and fog of non-observation.

“David gave himself to prayer; in the Hebrew, it is, but I prayer: a Christian is all over prayer: he  
prays



prays at rising, at lying down, and as he walks : like a prime favourite at court, who has the key to the privy stairs, and can wake his prince by night.

“We find David at prayer in the morning ; and our blessed Lord, early in the morning, before day. Chrysostom advises, Νίψον, πρὸ τῆς σωματικῆς, τὴν ψυχὴν : wash thy soul, before thou washest thy body.” A direction which I trust to observe inviolably, from this day forward, during my pilgrimage below.

The good man observes, page 292, that such as are truly converted, have no need to pray by a prescribed form : “they have the spirit of God to assist and enable them ; and they need not drink of another’s bucket, who have the fountain.” This certainly holds good, for the most part at least, with regard to sacred prayer ; but not always, I apprehend, in open devotions, whether of a public or a domestic kind. Grace and gifts do not always go together. A person may have true grace, and great grace, without gifts : and may, on the other hand, have shining gifts, without a spark of real grace ; witness the parable of the talents. All prayer is formal, in the worst sense, which does not ascend from the heart, by the Holy Ghost ; and all prayer is spiritual, which does ; be it prescribed, or extemporary. Mr. Lee adds, p. 296,

“God hath declared himself graciously pleased with secret prayer, so as to send an angel into Daniel’s chamber ; and he was weary with flying, *volans in lassitudine*, he moved so swiftly ; as the original text expresses it ; Dan. ix. 21. מַעַף בְּיַעַף. What an high expression [and strong figure] is this ! Even angels are represented as weary with hasty flights to bring saints their answers ! Of what great account does the Lord esteem his praying people, that angels are exprest to be tired in bringing tidings of mercy !”

Sunday, 17. God gave me strength to go through the public duties of the day in a comfortable and becoming manner. In the morning, read prayers, and preached, here at Fen-Ottery, to a large congregation ; and, in the afternoon, at Harpford, to an exceeding numerous



merous one. Baptized a daughter of farmer John Carter's. Between morning and afternoon service read the first epistle to the Thessalonians in the Greek. In the evening, read the Cripplegate Lectures. Though my joy in the Lord has not been great to day, yet this has been a profitable sabbath to my own soul: O God, make it so to the attentive people who sat under my unworthy ministry!

Friday, 22. In the morning rode to Exeter, by appointment, to meet Mr. Luce. Put up at the Swan. Bought Cave's *Historia Literaria*, Brook's Dispensatory, and Erskine's Sermons, in three vols. At night, I spent three or four hours, reading Erskine's Sermons; particularly the following ones: "The rent Vail of the Temple;" — "The Harmony of Divine Attributes;" — "The Believer exalted in imputed Righteousness;" — and, "Faith's Plea upon God's Word and Covenant." The reading of these sweet discourses was wonderfully blest to my soul. Great was my rejoicing and triumph in Christ. The Lord was with me of a truth, and his gracious visitation revived my spirit. One moment's communion with Christ, one moment's sense of union with him, one moment's view of interest in him, is ineffable, inestimable!

Saturday, 23. Continued at Exeter, until the afternoon. Before dinner, Mr. Luce and I made a formal resignation of our respective livings, before Mr. Geare and two other witnesses. Having signed and sealed the instruments of resignation, we left them with Mr. Geare, to be transmitted to the bishop. Prosper thou the work of our hands upon us, yea, prosper thou our handy work, Supreme Disposer of all things! May thy glorious Majesty, and thy gracious blessing, be upon us, for thy mercies sake in Jesus Christ! Amen.

After dinner, left Exeter, and returned to Fen-Ottery. The ride was far from a comfortable one. Hail, rain, or snow, almost the whole way.

I think, this has been the most remarkable day, in point of weather, I ever knew. Between the time of my rising in the morning, and returning home at night,  
we



we have had frost and thaw, snow, rain, hail, thunder and lightning, calm, high wind, and sun-shine : a mixture of almost all weathers, from sun-rise to sun-set.

Before I retired to my chamber, I read Erskine's Sermon (and a matchless one it is), entitled, "The Promising God a Performing God :" and the Lord set the seal of his spirit on my heart. I was enabled to mix faith with what I read ; and God made it a time of love, joy, peace, and spiritual refreshment to my soul. I could look and pray to him as my covenant God in Jesus Christ, who loved me from everlasting, and will love me without end.

Sunday, 24. A day of almost perpetual rain. Read prayers and preached, in the morning, at Harpford, and here in the afternoon, to large congregations, considering the weather. God was with me in a way of bodily strength : but I cannot say I had much spiritual communion with him in a way of sensible intercourse. But though my fleece was not watered, I trust the dew of heaven fell around.

Between the morning and afternoon service, I read Erskine's Sermon, entitled, "The King held in the Galleries :" not without much comfort and confirmation in Christ.

In the evening farmer Roberts came here to settle his tythe. I told him, I never transacted business on the Lord's Day, and desired him to defer paying me 'till some other time.—At night read Erskine's Sermon, entitled, "The humble Soul the peculiar Favourite of Heaven."

Sunday, 31. Read prayers and preached in the morning here at Fen-Ottery : and, in the afternoon, to an exceeding large congregation at Harpford. Between morning and afternoon service, I made some very important additions to my sermon (wrote last Monday) on Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27. In delivering it at Harpford, to-day, God was with me of a truth. His word was eagerly received, and seemed to be deeply felt, by very many. I think I have seldom, if ever, seen such an appearance of usefulness among my Harpford people,



ple, since I knew them, as this afternoon. Dr. P. of Ottery, seemed to be touched from above: Lord bring him sensibly and experimentally within the bond of the covenant, if it please thee; and likewise all the elect souls who have heard me this day.

How sweet is the work of the ministry, when attended with the unction and power of the Holy One! My soul has been very barren, ever since last Lord's Day; but this Sabbath has been a Sabbath indeed.

Spent the evening, both agreeably and profitably, in reading the Confession of Faith, Charge, and Sermon, delivered at Bristol last August, at the ordination of Mr. Evans, jun. Blessed be God for the advancement of his interest among us, under whatever form. Lord, increase the number of thy faithful witnesses, every where, and in every denomination of Protestants!

Monday, February 1. Before I went to bed this night, the Lord favoured me with some sweet intimations of his love.

Sunday, 7. In the morning, at Harpford; and here, at Fen-Ottery, in the afternoon, I read prayers and preached to a very full congregation each time; and, I trust, the word was blest to some. My strength and enlargement of soul (especially in the afternoon) were very considerable. Bless the Lord, O my soul; and learn to trust him who is faithfulness itself.—In the evening, read Bunyan's Pilgrim. What a stiff, sapless, tedious piece of work is that written by bishop Patrick! How does the unlearned tinker of Bedford outshine the bishop of Ely! I have heard, that his lordship wrote his Pilgrim, by way of antidote against what he deemed the fanaticism of John Bunyan's Pilgrim. But what a rich fund of heavenly experience, life, and sweetness, does the latter contain! How heavy, lifeless, and unevangelical, is the former! Such is the difference, between writing from a worldly spirit, and under the influence of the spirit of God.

Wednesday, 10. The Lord was very gracious to my soul this afternoon. His spirit was the comforter, and Mr. Erskine's two sermons, on "The Rainbow of the Covenant,"



Covenant," were the channel through which that comfort was conveyed. Amid my many seasons, and long intervals, of barrenness and want of joy, God sometimes makes me glad with the light of his countenance! But, alas! I can too often say, with him of old, concerning such sweet seasons, "*rara hora, brevis mora.*" Yet I can, through grace, say likewise,

A moment's intercourse with thee  
Is worth a year's delay.

Surely, O God, I could not long after thy presence, if I did not know the sweetness of it, and love thee in some measure: and I could not know that, but by the revelation of thy spirit in my heart; nor love thee at all, if thou hadst not first loved me.—We grieve at the absence of those we love, and of none else: blessed be God for this evidence of true (however weak) grace!

Thursday, 11. Began to compose "A Course of Family-Prayer \*." Lord, prosper the work of my hands upon me, and make it useful!

Friday, 12. A little before bed-time, I darted up in ejaculation, that God would be pleased to strengthen me, and give me faithfulness, in the discharge of my duty toward the parishioners of Broad-Hembury, whither I expect soon to remove. My God gave me this sweet answer immediately, "I will enable thee, and bless thee." Behold the servant of the Lord; be it unto me, according to thy word!

I desire to remember, with grief and shame, that soon after the above manifestation of God's favour to my soul, I was tempted, before I could get to sleep, with high thoughts of my own righteousness, both as a man and as a minister. The enemy plied his fiery darts very thick, and came in as a flood; but the spirit of the Lord lifted up a standard against him. I was enabled (glory to divine grace) to reject the cursed insinuations as I would hell-fire. Oh, that ever such a wretch as I, should be tempted to think highly of himself! I that am, of myself, nothing but sin and weakness; I, in  
whose

\* Lately published, price 2s.



whose flesh naturally dwells no good thing; I, who deserve damnation for the best work I ever performed! Lord Jesus, humble me to the dust, yea to the very centre of abasement, in thy presence. Root out and tear up this most poisonous, this most accursed weed, from the unworthiest heart that ever was. Shew me my utter nothingness. Keep me sensible of my sinnership. Sink me down, deeper and deeper, into penitence and self-abhorrence. Break the Dagon of pride in pieces before the ark of thy merits. Demolish, by the breath of thy spirit, the walls, the Babel of self-righteousness and self-opinion; level them with the trodden soil, grind them to powder, annihilate them for ever and ever. Grace, grace, be all my experience, and all my cry! Amen. Amen.

Sunday, 14. In the morning, read prayers and preached here at Fen-Ottery, to a pretty full auditory. In the afternoon, read prayers at Harpford, and preached Mrs. Mary Wheaton's funeral sermon, to an exceeding great congregation indeed. I could not forbear observing, "that God had spared her to a good old age: that she was born in the year 1675, ten years before the death of Charles II. and about fourteen before the coming in of king William III. that she lived in the reigns of seven monarchs, and died last Tuesday, aged ninety-three." Great was my fervour and enlargement of soul; nor less to appearance the attention of them that heard. Nay, they seemed to do more than attend: the word, I verily believe, came, with power and weight, to their hearts. I never yet saw my Church so full (insomuch that there was hardly any standing), and think, seldom, if ever, beheld a people that seemed to relish the gospel better. Neither they nor myself were weary, though I detained them much longer than usual.—Since my intention of changing livings with Mr. Luce has been publicly known, a spirit of great earnestness and life appears to have been poured out on my people, And yet, I trust, I see my way plainly pointed out, and that it is the will of God I should leave them. A wonderful



combination of providential circumstances, leaves me scarce any room to doubt of my call to Broad-Hembury. Lord, bring me not up thither, unless thy presence goes with me! Take care of thy own elect (and so thou assuredly wilt) here and in this neighbourhood! And give us, O give us, some more parting blessings!—Mr. Holmes, of Exeter, came from thence this morning to hear the unworthiest of God's messengers. This gentleman was at my Churches, both parts of the day; and, from what conversation I had with him, appears to be one who knows and loves the truth as it is in Jesus.

Wednesday, 17. In my chamber, this evening, those words, 2 Tim. i. 7. "God hath not given unto us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind:" were imprest much upon my heart, and my meditation on them was attended, not only with great peace and sweetness, but with joy in the Holy Ghost. My sense of union and communion with God was very clear: and I was enabled to see myself one of God's regenerate people, by finding within myself (through the riches of grace alone) those three infallible evidences of conversion, which that delightful text lays down. The spirit of Christ was to me a spirit of power, when he effectually called me to the knowledge of himself in the year 1756, at Codymain, in Ireland, under the ministry of Mr. James Morris: he has been, and is, a spirit of love, in my soul, to all the divine persons; and, as such, the principle of sanctification: and he has been to me a spirit of a sound mind, by leading me into, and confirming me in, the light of gospel truth, in its full harmony and consistency; which I verily believe, for my own part, to be a branch, at least, of that *σωφρονισμὸς* (which, among other significations, denotes wisdom and instruction), mentioned by the apostle in that passage; and may not, I apprehend, be improperly rendered, soundness of judgment. Yet, the *σωφρονισμὸς*, abstracted from the *δυναμὶς* and the *ἀγάπη*, is not, of itself, a certain evidence of regeneration: it is the divine power, and the love of  
of



of God shed abroad in the heart, which render soundness of judgment not only comfortable, but a mark of saving grace. Blessed be God for my experience of all the three!

Sunday, 21. Read prayers, and preached, in the morning, at Harpford; and in the afternoon, here at Fen-Ottery. I have great reason to be thankful for the strength and presence of mind, with which I was enabled to go through with my public duties, both parts of the day; and to be humbled in soul, for my want of spiritual liveliness and fervour. Lord, I am and can be alert in thy work, no longer than I feel the efficacy of divine attraction: may I, if it please thee, feel it more and more, for the sake of thy rich mercy in Jesus Christ. Amen.

In the evening, I was enabled to draw much spiritual improvement from that passage, John xi. 40. "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?" Lord, cause me to do the one, and to see the other!

Tuesday, 23. Awoke very early this morning, with those words full and deep upon my mind, "I will give unto you the sure mercies of David." I cannot say that I had an immediate sense of covenant-interest in that glorious promise: yet the impression of it was attended with a satisfactory sweetness, and its signification was, as it were, spontaneously opened to me, in a manner too clear and pleasing to express. It seemed to me (and I can find no reason still, to think otherwise) that the passage *τα ὅσια Δαβὶδ τα πῖσα*, may be literally rendered "the sacred" [i. e. the inviolable and] "faithful things of David:" for, why may not *ὅσιος*, which signifies holy, just, and sacred, have, in this connection, the signification of inviolable? and denote the firmness, certainty, and perpetuity of those spiritual blessings, which are given and made over to God's elect, by virtue and in consequence of the Father's covenant of grace made, in their behalf, with Christ, our antitypical David? This, at least, must be granted; that the words, as they lie in the New Testament, will



will bear the translation I have given : and my translation and sense of them seem exactly to coincide with the original passage, as it stands in the prophet, from whence the apostle quoted it.

Sunday, 28. The Lord was with me in the discharge of my ministry both parts of the day ; especially in the afternoon at Harpford. O my faithful God, bless the word spoken !

Wednesday, March 2. In secret prayer, this morning, before I left my chamber, the fire of divine love kindled, and the Lord sensibly shone upon my soul. I could not forbear saying, "O why art thou so kind to the chief of sinners?" I was so taken up, and as it were circumfused, with the love of God, and the perception of my union with him, that I could hardly ask for pardon.—Thus I walked in the light of his countenance, for, I suppose, two or three minutes ; when, alas ! evil wanderings intervened, my warmth of joy suddenly subsided, and I was, in great measure, brought down from the Mount. Yet the sweetness and peace of this heavenly visit remained, after the blessed visitant was withdrawn. Though the sun himself retired from view, yet (if I may so express it) I enjoyed the refraction of his beams. He did not disappear, without leaving a blessing behind him ; sufficient, I trust, for faith to live upon until I see him again.

In the afternoon, wrote several letters. Among the rest, one to my honoured friend, Dr. Gill : which I concluded thus : " You see, Sir, my letter is the very reverse of Ezekiel's roll. And with reason. Since, when God puts gladness into the heart, why should not the lips overflow with praise?—Though I am certain that you are immortal until your work is done ; and that God will perform the thing that is appointed for you ; I am yet enabled to bear you, in the arms of prayer, to the throne of grace : and presume to request, that, at the seasons of access with joy, you will not forget the meanest of God's people, and the unworthiest, the most impotent (yet not the least favoured) of his messengers. I need  
not



not tell you, that I mean, honoured and very dear sir, your obliged, &c."

Thursday, 3. Upon a review of this day, in which my mind has been variously exercised, I have great reason to stand astonished at my own baseness; nor less so, at the several instances of mercy, both temporal and spiritual, with which God has favoured me since I awaked this morning. I can, through grace, adopt David's language, and close the evening with his sweet hymn of thanksgiving: "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thy sin, and healeth all thine infirmities; who saveth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies; who satisfies thy mouth with good things," the good things of his providence, and thy heart with the better things of his grace; "making thee young and lusty as an eagle." Psalm ciii.

Sunday, 6. In the morning, read prayers and preached, at Harpford; and, in the afternoon, here at Fen-Ottery: would I could say, with the fervour and sensible joy I sometimes experience. But I was rather in a cold frame the whole day. Lord, pardon my unworthiness, and wash away the iniquity of my holy things, in the blood of him thou hast provided for a burnt-offering! Thou art faithful, who hast promised: nor is my interest in thee the less secure, because I have not always eyes to see it clearly.

Tuesday, 8. Our family dining early to-day, Mr. Harris (of Wellington) and myself took a walk, about two in the afternoon, to the top of Fen-Ottery Hill. Looking round from thence, I observed to him how plainly we could see the two Churches, of Harpford and Fen-Ottery, in the vale beneath us. Perceiving, however, a pillar of smoke rising into the air, at a little distance from Harpford tower; I asked my companion, "What he thought it was?" He replied, "I suppose they are burning strol." Imagining this to be the case, we continued our walk for, I



believe, full three hours, round Ailsbear Hill, and other parts of the common. Coming, at last, to Mick-tam in our circuit, we called on old Farmer Franke: and were hardly seated, before he asked us, "Whether we had heard of the fire at Harpford?" Adding, that, "according to the best of what his eldest son could discern, it was Farmer Endicott's house that was burning." The wind being pretty strong, North-East by East, I knew, that, if it was Endicott's house, or any of the adjoining ones, the vicarage-house and offices must be in imminent danger. I posted away for Harpford, without delay: and, being got within near view of the village, plainly perceived, by the course of the smoke, that the vicarage had actually taken fire. By the time I arrived at the wooden bridge, I met a man coming to acquaint me with what had happened: upon seeing me, he saluted me with "Sir, your house is burnt down to the ground." Entering the village, I found it almost literally true. The dwelling house, the barn, the linhays, the stable, &c. with the back house rented by John Woodford, were as it were by sympathy, all in flames at once, and more than half consumed.—Thomas Wilson's house, and that in which Henry Bishop lately lived (from which latter mine caught fire), were totally destroyed. When I saw the vicarage irrecoverably lost, I returned to Fen-Ottery, and took horse for Exeter; where I arrived between eight and nine in the evening, and put up at Mr. Lathbury's. Being fatigued with my hasty ride, I thought it best to apprise Mr. Gearing (agent for the London Insurance Office) by a note, of what had happened: who, in his answer, desired to see me the next morning.

What I chiefly enter down this account in my diary for, is this: namely, as a memento of God's great goodness to me, both in a way of providence and grace. Though I was not certain whether the expence (I mean, all above the insurance) of rebuilding the vicarage-house, with its appendages, might not eventually fall on me (notwithstanding my resignation of the living



living last January 23), by Mr. Luce's probably refusing, in consequence of this misfortune, to complete our projected exchange; yet neither the report, nor the sight, of this alarming visitation, made me so much as change countenance, or feel the least dejection. This could not proceed from nature; for, my nerves are naturally so weak, that, in general, the least discomposing accident oversets me quite, for a time. It was therefore owing to the supporting goodness of God, who made me experience the truth of that promise, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as is thy day, so shall thy strength be." Surely, we can both do, and endure, all things, through Christ enabling us. Had any one told me beforehand, "You will see the vicarage all in flames, without the least emotion of mind," I should have thought it impossible. But the strength of God was made perfect in my weakness; and therefore it was that my heart stood fast, believing in the Lord. O may thy grace be ever sufficient for me!

Spent the evening not only in a comfortable, but even in a rejoicing frame of mind; and never rested better afterwards. Thou, Lord, canst make the feeble, as David. Thus, the 8th of March was a day to be particularly noted, not in my book only, but in my latest remembrance; on account of that wonderful support with which I was favoured: which not only made my feet as hind's feet, and caused me to walk on the high places of Jacob; but which even bore me up, as on eagle's wings, above the reach of grief, fear, and weakness; and, as it were, laid me at rest on the bosom of Christ, and within the arms of God.

Wednesday, 9. Continued at Exeter until after dinner. Called on Mr. Gearing, and Mr. Geare. Found, upon inquiry, that, the fire at Harpford happening after the living was vacated by my resignation of it, the exchange will certainly stand good, and the melancholy event there, cannot possibly affect me. Who would not trust in the Lord, and wait until a cloudy dispensation is cleared up? Through grace, I was enabled to do this: and the result of things has



proved that it would not only have been wicked, but foolish to have done otherwise. O that I may always be as well enabled to adopt and realize that divine apothegm, "He that believeth, shall not make haste."

Spent about an hour and an half with good Mr. Holmes: whom I found in great distress of mind, on account of his only surviving son being given over in a fever. During our interview, God so opened my mouth, and so enlarged my heart, that, I trust, both my friend and myself found our spiritual strength renewed, and were sensibly and powerfully comforted from above.—In the evening, returned to Fen-Ottery.

Thursday, 10. Drinking tea, this afternoon, at Farmer Carter's, I had an opportunity of seeing more leisurely, the devastation at Harpford. The whole vicarage is one large mass of ruins. What a providential mercy was it, that I resigned the living before this misfortune happened! O God, how wise, and how gracious art thou, in all thy ways!

Friday, 11. After breakfast, rode to Broad Hem-bury, where I dined with Mr. Luce; who bears the late afflictive providence at Harpford better than I could have expected.

Sunday, 13. In the morning read prayers and preached here at Fen-Ottery; and, in the afternoon, at Harpford (from Rom. viii. 28), to an exceeding large congregation.—I have much reason to bless God, for the great measure of bodily strength, vouchsafed me to-day: yot my soul was by no means in a lively frame. Neither triumphant, nor depressed, my mind seemed to resemble the time mentioned by the prophet, in which the day will be neither clear nor dark, Zech. xiv. 6.

At night, before I went to bed, was much troubled with coldness and wanderings in secret prayer.

Monday, 14. Looking over one of my journals this morning, I could not help blessing God for such a series of mercies as my life has been made up of; upon which, these words were instantaneously and sweetly



sweetly suggested to my soul. "I will carry thee on." Amen, gracious Lord!

Sunday, 20. In the morning, read prayers, and preached, at Harpford, to a very full congregation: but without any ray of sweetness or enlargement; at least, to myself. Between morning and afternoon service, I was much dejected and bowed down in spirit. I was so far left to the doubtings and evil surmisings of my own unbelieving heart, as even to dread the remaining public duties that lay before me. But the glorious Lord was better to me than my fears, and graciously disappointed my ungracious misgivings: for, in the afternoon, he was with me, both in a way of strength, and in a way of consolation. I read prayers and preached here at Fen-Ottery, with great freedom, and considerable liveliness, to a crowded church.

About six in the evening, being alone in my chamber, I was still more sensibly led forth beside the waters of comfort. I tasted some sweet droppings of the honeycomb, and could say, "My Lord, and my God." The embers were blown aside, by the breath of the Holy Spirit; the veil of unbelief was rent; and the shadows fled away. Light sprung up, and the fire kindled: even the light of God's countenance, and the fire of his love. Yet my comforts did not amount to the full triumph, and extatic bliss, I have sometimes experienced; but were gentle, peaceful, and serene: attended with a mild, refreshing, lenient warmth; which melted me into conscious nothingness before God, and made me feel him and rest upon him as my all in all. The very state this, in which, if it be his will, I could wish both to live and die: for I look upon such a placid reception of his gently-pervading influence, where all is soft and sweet and still, to be the most desirable frame of soul on this side heaven. But I desire to leave all to the disposal of him who best knows how to deal with his militant people; and who will



will be sure to lead them to heaven by the right way, and me among the rest.

Monday, 21. Between ten and eleven at night, in my chamber, a little before I betook myself to rest, the Lord favoured me with some gracious outgoings of affection toward himself. My meditation of him, and communion with him, were sweet; and the intimations of his love to me, drew forth my love to him. The cherishing south-wind of his loving spirit breathed upon the garden of my soul, and the spices thereof flowed out. I could say, and still can, "Whom have I in heaven, but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of thee. Come, O my beloved, into thy garden, and eat thy pleasant fruits!" Thus, though affected, ever since the afternoon, with a slight head-ach, my bodily indisposition was more than compensated with the peace that passeth all understanding; and I could rejoice in the sense of union with Christ, my exalted head; a head, that is never out of order.

Thursday, 24. In the afternoon, the Lord gave me this word of comfort, "I have put away thy sin." It came with power, and I was enabled to believe the testimony of the Holy Spirit. Towards evening, I was in a very comfortable frame of soul, while making some considerable additions to my sermon on John ii. 19. How greatly do these occasional visits from above, cheer and strengthen a sinner on his way to Zion! Surely, there is a river, and not only the streams, but even a few drops of it, make glad the city of God.

Friday, 25. This afternoon and evening, but especially at night, the Lord has been very gracious to my soul. I could see myself loved with an everlasting love, and cloathed with Christ's everlasting righteousness. My peace flowed, as a river; and I found the comforts of the Holy Spirit to be neither few nor small. My sense of justification was unclouded, as when the clear shining of the sun giveth light.



light. My beloved is mine, and I am his. Under these sweet, unutterable manifestations, I have scarce any thing to pray for: supplication is swallowed up in wonder, love, and praise: Jesus smiles, and more than a ray of heaven is shed upon my soul. "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." My harp is taken down from the willows, and I can sing the Lord's song in a strange land.

Touch'd by the finger of thy love,  
Sweet melody of praise I bring;  
Join the enraptur'd choirs above,  
And feel the bliss which makes them sing.

Saturday, 26. A letter from London informs me that poor old Lady Goring is lately turned Papist. Surely, it is a debt I owe to God, to truth, to my own conscience, and to the friendship with which that unhappy lady formerly honoured me, to write to her on this sad occasion. Lord, keep me stedfast in the purity of thy blessed gospel, and, if it please thee, recover her from this snare of the devil!

Was indisposed great part of this day, with the head-ach: but enjoyed, towards evening, a measure of the peace of God. At night, a little before I went to bed, the Lord was pleased to give me a full assurance of his being with me in a way of grace and strength, and carrying me comfortably through the duties of the ensuing sabbath. I could no more doubt of his giving me a sabbath-day's blessing, than if the sabbath had been passed, and the blessing actually received.

Sunday, 27. Palm-Sunday. Between eight and nine this morning, the Lord visited my soul with a lively sense of his salvation. My comfort, joy, and triumph, were unutterable, for some minutes; and the savour of his precious ointment, thus divinely shed abroad



abroad in my heart, abode with me, more or less, through the course of the whole day. In the morning, my congregation here at Fen-Ottery was very full; and I was enabled to read prayers, and to preach, with more inward liberty, and consolation of spirit, than I have done for some Sundays back. The gospel ordinances were sweet to my taste, and I experienced that animating promise, "He that watereth, shall be watered also himself."

In the afternoon, read prayers, and preached, at Harpford, to a congregation indeed. "Behold the Lamb of God," was my subject: O Lamb of God, cause me, and those who heard me this day, to behold thee here, in the light of special faith; and hereafter, in the light of endless glory!

Though I have a violent cold upon me, with a tendency to a sore throat, yet I was carried through my duties, not only with great comfort, but with unusual strength of body and voice. A worse church to speak in, I never knew, than Harpford; yet I am confident I was well heard by all present; whose number, I apprehend, was at least seven hundred: which, I dare believe, I should not have been, considering my hoarseness to-day, had not my soul been particularly happy in the Lord. The sense of his presence giveth power to the saint, and makes men act beyond themselves. Under the influence of his Spirit, the meanest believer becomes like the chariots of Amminadib, and goes forth like a giant refreshed with wine: the places of God's worship are, each, a banqueting house; and the means of grace are so many mountains of spices.

Tuesday, 29. That sweet text, "This God is our God for ever and ever; he shall be our guide even unto death:" proved a cordial to my soul this morning. Blessed be his name, I could adopt those words of triumph, and still can, in the assurance of faith. I am, through grace, as clearly satisfied of my interest in the blessing they contain, as if they were addressed to me by name.

I re-



I remember a delightful paraphrase of this golden passage, written by Mr. Hart, which I cannot help putting down here; and the rather, as they are the very language of my soul at present:

“ This God is the God we adore,  
Our faithful, unchangeable friend;  
Whose love is as great as his pow’r,  
And knows neither measure nor end.  
’Tis Jesus, the first and the last,  
Whose spirit shall guide us safe home;  
We’ll praise him for all that is past,  
And trust him for all that’s to come.”

In the afternoon began, and about half finished, a sermon on Phil. ii. 8, which, if the Lord please, I hope to deliver from the pulpit next Friday. The Lord has already, while writing it, made it a means of grace to myself; and gave me to experience the power of that dying love, which the text and the preceding context so sweetly celebrate. O Lamb of God, slain for me! Thy blood is balm; thy presence is bliss; thy smile is heaven. Through thy precious righteousness, sinners and salvation meet together. Thou hast knit me to thyself in the bonds of an everlasting covenant which shall not be forgotten and cannot be annulled. Thou hast set me as a seal upon thine arm, and hast set the seal of thy spirit upon my heart. I can sing, with one of thy saints, now in heaven,

“ Love mov’d thee to die;  
And on this I rely,  
My Saviour hath lov’d me, I cannot tell why:  
But this I can find,  
We two are so join’d,  
He’ll not be in glory and leave me behind.”

April 1. Good-Friday. In the morning, read prayers, preached, and administered the blessed Sacrament, at Harpford. Both in the pulpit and at the Lord’s table, my joy, consolation, and enlargement of soul were great: and I think I never saw communicants more humble, serious, and devout.  
God’s



God's presence seemed to be manifested among us in a very uncommon manner. In the afternoon, read prayers and preached here at Fen-Ottery: and the glorious majesty of the Lord our God was evidently upon speaker and hearers. This has been a Good Friday indeed to my soul; and I dare believe to the souls of many beside. Lord, make the sensible unction of thy spirit not only to descend upon us, but to abide with us!

Saturday, 2. After breakfast rode to Exeter; where I dined at Mr. Holmes's. Found that dear and excellent man not only more resigned to the will of God, but even more chearful than I could well have conceived. Mrs. Paul, of Topsham, and Mr. Lewis, a worthy Baptist minister, dined with us. Our conversation at table was on the best subjects: and I found our Christian discussions sensibly blest to my soul. After tea, myself and four more followed the remains of Master Holmes to Eade, about two miles out of the city, where they were interred. Mr. Cole, curate of the parish, read the funeral service; and I preached a sermon, suitable to the solemn occasion, to a large auditory, and one of the most attentive ones I ever saw. I had a violent hoarseness upon me all the afternoon, which made me apprehensive I should both speak and be heard with difficulty. But, upon my entrance into the pulpit, while the first psalm was singing, I lifted up my heart to God, and prayed, "Lord, help me this once." Nor was my supplication lost. I was helped indeed. I preached forty minutes, with great ease to myself, and with great strength, readiness, and distinctness. It was a blessed season to my own heart; and, I earnestly trust, to the souls of many that heard. The word did indeed seem to come with the demonstration of the spirit, and with power. Returning to Exon, I supped with Mr. Holmes and the company; and from thence, between eleven and twelve at night, returned home to Fen-Ottery.

Sunday, 3. Easter-Sunday. Rose this morning  
with



with such a cold and hoarseness on my voice, that I could hardly speak either audibly or intelligibly. Read prayers, however, (if it might be called reading) here at Fen-Ottery, and administered the blessed Sacrament: but, knowing it would be in vain to attempt preaching, ordered the clerk to make an apology to the congregation. At the table of the Lord, the Lord of the table was with me of a truth; and made my soul rejoice, amid all the weakness of my body. In the afternoon rode to Harpford; where, after reading prayers to a very great congregation, as well as I could, which was very badly, I was in some doubt whether I had best attempt to preach or not. Considering, however, that if I found I could not make myself heard I could but cease, and grieving at the thought of sending away such a multitude without even endeavouring to break to them the word of life; I went up into the pulpit, and besought the Lord to manifest his strength in my weakness: and he graciously did. I preached three quarters of an hour, with wonderful strength, and unusual enlargement of soul. Awe and attention were visible on every face. I was enabled to exert myself greatly, and to pour out my whole soul in the ministry of the word. The sense of God's presence, together with the sweetness and dignity of the subject I was upon, melted me so, that I think I was never more strongly carried out. Once, in particular, I could scarce refrain from bursting into tears. Hoarse and disagreeable as my voice sounded, yet, I am convinced, the voice of the Holy Spirit made its way to many hearts. Indeed, all were struck, if there is any judgment to be formed by appearances. My wonder at the ability with which I was endued, and my gratitude to the blessed God for the comforts that were experienced, will hardly suffer me to desist from saying more of this memorable opportunity. Lord, who would not trust thee? Who would not love thee? The work, O God, was thine; and thine be all the glory! Amen, Amen.

Tuesday,



Tuesday, 5. My hoarseness, blessed be God, begins to go off. Drinking tea, to-day, at Mr. Leigh's, at Hayne, the company went away early, and Mr. Leigh and I had the remainder of the afternoon to ourselves. Our conversation took a very improving turn. We talked much of death, the assurance of faith, and the invincibility of converting grace. My conversation on the latter subject never seemed to come to him with so much conviction and power as now. He almost gave up his Arminianism, and drank in what I was enabled to say with a seriousness and sensibility I never saw in him before. He even appeared to relish the doctrine of grace, and to feel some of its power. Lord, let not thy spirit leave him, until thou hast made him cry, from the depth of his heart, "O sovereign grace! I am nothing! Thou art all!"

On my way home to Fen-Ottery, especially as I was riding over Tipton bridge, my soul was in a very comfortable frame. O the unutterable sweetness of sensible interest in God's election, the covenant of grace, and righteousness of Christ! I trust I can say, they are all mine.

Wednesday, 6.  This afternoon, about two o'clock, I received institution, at Exeter, to the living of Broad-Hembury. While on my knees the chancellor was committing the souls of that parish to my care, my own soul was secretly lifted up to God for a blessing: which, I humbly trust, will be given, for his mercy's sake in Jesus Christ.

Immediately after I was instituted to Broad-Hembury, Mr. Luce was instituted to Harpford.

Thursday, 7. That gracious promise was given me to-day, "I will inform thee and teach thee in the way wherein thou shalt go; and I will guide thee with mine eye." I had been, previously, much dejected in spirit, and exercised with various doubts: but that word of comfort came with such power and effect, that I was soon set to rights again.

Friday, 8. Mr. Luce dining here to-day, we  
walked,



walked, in the afternoon, to Harpford; where I inducted him into that living. In the course of this day, I was favoured with some comfortable glimpses of my heavenly Father's countenance. O that I could ever have an heart warm with love! But it is better to catch fire now and then, than to be always cold. Blessed be the comforter of God's elect, a live coal, from the golden altar which is before the throne, is sometimes dropt into my heart; and then I can sing,

Lov'd of my God, for him again,  
With love intense I burn :  
Chosen of thee ere time began,  
I chuse thee in return.

To have a part and lot in God's salvation is the main thing: but to have the joy of it is an additional blessing, which makes our way to the kingdom smooth and sweet.

Saturday, 9. In the evening, while returning from Broad-Hembury (where I dined to day), and at night after my return hither to Fen-Ottery, I had the comfort of sweet communion with God, and not only enjoyed that peace which the world cannot give, but was favoured with some delightful assurances of God's evelasting love to me a sinner. I was, like what is said of Naphthali, "satisfied with favour:" even with the favour of him whose name is as ointment poured forth; whom to know is life eternal; and whom to converse with is heaven. The spirit himself bore witness with my spirit, that I am a child of God, and a joint heir with Christ. Lord, doubtless thou art my Father: O enable me to love thee as such, and to walk worthy of my heavenly pedigree!

Sunday, 10. Did duty this day at the churches here, for, I suppose, the last time. In the morning, read prayers and preached at Fen-Ottery: and, in the afternoon, read prayers and preached at Harpford, to a very great congregation. At the latter church, God did indeed open to me a door both of

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knowledge and of utterance: insomuch that I could not possibly confine myself to my notes; but was carried out with extraordinary enlargement, readiness, and presence of mind; especially while speaking of the certain perseverance of God's regenerate people, and of the utter impossibility of being justified by works. I did not take any leave of my dear people. Farewell sermons, in my opinion, carry in them such an air of self-importance, that I have long resolved never to preach one again.—Let me rather close my ministry in this place with, 1. Secretly begging pardon of God to-night, for my manifold sins, omissions, and infirmities, both as a man and as a minister: 2. I earnestly intreat my gracious Lord to make me thankful for the innumerable mercies I have experienced since I had the care of these parishes upon me: 3. I pray God to command his efficacious blessing on my weak, sinful, and unworthy labours here; most humbly beseeching him to own the messages of salvation I have delivered from time to time, and to grant that the seed he has enabled me to sow may be found after many days. 4. I beg him to stay with these that stay, and to go with me when I go from them: that his presence and his blessing may be their portion, my portion, and the portion of those among whom I expect shortly to minister. O thou God of power and of grace! all hearts are in thy hand, and all events are at thy disposal! Set, O set the seal of thy almighty *fiat* upon each of these petitions! And supply all our need, according to thy riches in glory by Christ Jesus! Amen, Amen.

Tuesday, 12. At night, the Lord gave me to experience some gracious meltings of heart. How sweet are the humiliations of penitential love! I desire no greater bliss, than to lie at my heavenly Master's footstool, dissolved in wonder, gratitude, and self-abasement.

Friday, 15. Several words of comfort were, this day, at different times, spoken to and sealed upon my



my heart: particularly these three, "Fear not; I will be with thee."—"Trust me."—"I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." At another time these words were powerfully suggested to my soul, "Be joyful in the Lord." To many, all this would appear as the most palpable enthusiasm; and there was a time when I myself should have thought so too. But blessed be God the comforter. I know what it is to enjoy some degree of communion with the Father, and the Son by him. And, exclusive of this inward  $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\gamma\chi\ominus$ , which is, to myself, equivalent, in point of mental satisfaction, to ten thousand demonstrations; my experiences of this kind, considered even in the most rational view, cannot, I am well persuaded, be justly counted enthusiastic, or the offspring of an heated imagination: for, 1. They are attended with such a powerful sweetness, and such commanding weight, such satisfactory clearness, and such a perfect consistency with the promises of Scripture, as leave me no cause to doubt of its being indeed the voice of God to my soul. 2. My mind, on these occasions, is as absolutely passive as my body can at any time be on hearing any person speak with whom I converse. 3. I argue from events. I can, to the best of my remembrance and belief, truly say, that I never yet have had one promise or assurance, concerning temporal things, impressed on me beforehand in a way of communion with God, which the event did not realize: I never, that I know of, knew it fail in any one single instance. I do not say that a particular assurance, concerning any particular futurity, is always given me beforehand: far from it: but when it has, two unisons never harmonized more exactly than my assurance and the subsequent providence. And if this has, hitherto, been the case with me in temporal concerns, and matters of Providence, why should similar indulgences from above, respecting spiritual things, and matters of grace, be treated as fanciful?



At night, in my chamber, the Lord gave me several solid assurances of his future providential goodness to me. I was enabled to know the voice of him that spake within, and to cast the anchor of faith on what he said. My complacency and satisfaction of soul were equally comfortable and unutterable. O my God, that which thou hast promised thou art able also to perform.

Saturday, 16. In the evening, rode to Broad-Hembury; where, at night, before I went to bed, the Lord gave me some comfortable assurances in secret prayer.

Sunday, 17. In the morning, read prayers and preached at Broad-Hembury, to a large congregation. I opened (if I may so speak) my spiritual commission, by discoursing from those words, 2 Cor. iv. 5. "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord." In the afternoon, read prayers and preached, *ibid.* to a very numerous congregation, from Jude 3. and baptized two infants. Great was my reason for gratitude and thankfulness to the gracious Author of all good. I was enabled, both parts of the day, to go through the duties of it with much satisfaction and presence of mind: and the word preached seemed to be relished by many, and to be well received by all.

In the evening returned to Fen-Orrery; where I read, with great comfort and joy in the Holy Ghost, Mr. Hervey's sermon on "The Way of Holiness." In secret prayer, too, before I went to bed, the channel of comfortable intercourse was opened between God and my soul. All weakness and all unworthiness as I am, I have, in Christ, both righteousness and strength: and God, through him, is my portion for ever. In his favour is life: and that life is mine.

Monday, 18. Late to night, when the rest of the family were retired to rest, the reading of Jenks's Meditations was much blessed to my soul. Truly,  
my



my fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, whose precious blood, in a way of expiation, cleanseth me from all sin.

Thursday, 21. Riding home, to night, from Exeter, the Lord was with me in the way of spiritual communion. Applying to him for a blessing on my intended removal to Broad-Hembury, this answer was given me, "Go, and I will be with thee:" and, a little while after, "Thou shalt shake off every weight."

Friday, 22. Before I left my chamber this morning, I was enabled to hold sweet intercourse with the Father of spirits, in secret prayer. For a minute or two my comforts, not to say raptures, were of a very exalted kind. Yet, within an hour after, I was grieved with the bubblings up of in-dwelling sin; and was, for some time, in a very uncomfortable state of inward temptation: but the Lord kept me from mine iniquity, and withheld me from actually falling. Towards evening, while finishing a sermon on Psalm xxxii. 1. I experienced some gracious meltings of soul, and sensibly enjoyed the rays of my heavenly Father's presence.

Saturday, 23. After dinner, rode to Broad-Hembury; where, at night, in my chamber, a little before I went to bed, my soul was harassed, in a sad and very unusual manner, with doubts and fears and unbelief. I was in spiritual darkness, even darkness that might be felt. I do not know that I ever was so much given up to the evil surmisings of my own heart, since I have been in orders. I could hardly act faith at all. Had it not been for fear of exposing myself and disturbing the family, I should have roared for the disquietness of my heart. My heavenly pilot disappeared; I seemed to have quite lost my hold on the rock of ages; I sunk in the deep mire; and the waves and storms went over me. Yet, at last, in prayer, I was enabled, I know not how, to throw myself, absolutely and at large, on God, at all events, and for better for worse; yet without com-  
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fort, and almost without hope. I was, in short, almost in a state of despair. My horror and distress were unutterable. And in this condition I remained, until it pleased God to give me some sleep.

Sunday, 24. When I awaked this morning, I had peace of soul, and a considerable measure of confidence in God.—Read prayers, and preached with strength of body and enlargement of mind.—After my return from public morning service, my consolations from above were inexpressible. Heaviness did indeed endure for a night, but joy came in the morning. My soul could magnify the Lord; and my spirit rejoiced in God my Saviour.—Read Bishop Wilkins's Preacher, with great approbation and pleasure, and not without improvement.—In the afternoon, read prayers and preached to a very large congregation; and God was with me of a truth. My own soul was richly watered, and there seemed to be showers of blessing all around. I never preached so much extempore in my life before. My whole introduction was off-hand: nor did I ever express myself more freely, pertinently, and to my own satisfaction. My text, both parts of the day, Psalm xxxii. 1. O what infinite amends has God made me for the distresses of last night! Might I chuse for myself (which, however, I am not qualified for, nor yet desirous of doing), I should hardly, I think, care how much God humbled me in private before him, so I might but enjoy his presence and blessing in the discharge of my public duties.

What a day has this been! A Sabbath day indeed; a day of feasting to my soul; a day of triumph and rejoicing. He brought me into his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love. I never was more assisted from above than this afternoon; very seldom so much. Lord, bless the people as thou hast blessed me!

☞ Here let me leave it on thankful record, for my comfort and support (if it please God) in future times of trial and desertion, that I never was lower  
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in the valley than last night; nor higher in the mount than to-day. The Lord chastened me, but did not give me over unto death. And he never will. He may, indeed, for a small moment, hide his face from me; but with everlasting kindness will he have mercy on me.

Saturday, 30. After dinner, rode to Broad-Hembury; where I spent the evening, and lay at Mrs. Pynsent's. Very different, through the tender mercy of God, was my frame of mind, to-night, from what it was the Saturday before. I was now enabled to rest, with comfortable complacency, on the power, faithfulness, and grace of my heavenly Father. What a poor feeble creature is a believer, when faith is not in exercise! He is like an eagle whose wings are pinioned. But when the South-wind of the Holy Spirit breathes upon the soul, and fans the smoking flax, the Christian grows as the lily, and casteth forth the root as Lebanon. He is, for the time being, almost tempted to sing that *requiem* which David, in similar circumstances, sung to his soul, "I shall never be removed; thou, Lord, of thy goodness, hast made my hill so strong."

May 1. Sunday. Read prayers and preached, morning and afternoon, at Broad-Hembury. The Lord was with me both parts of the day.—In private, spent several hours in reading Seed's Sermons. Elegant and masterly is the composition; nervous and refined the reasoning: but the main thing, I apprehend, is wanting; even that spiritual unction, that vital vein of gospel experience, without which the correctest performances of this kind are, to me, powerless and tasteless.—Read also Wall's Critical Notes on the New Testament; in which are many things useful and ingenious: yet I cannot help thinking that the alterations (improperly styled amendments) which the learned author would make in the original text, are, for the far greater part, extremely flighty and conjectural; often quite injudicious; and,



sometimes, astonishingly daring. Besides, the dead fly of Arminianism mars and taints the whole pot of ointment.

Thursday, 5. My honoured and most dear mother's birth-day. Gracious God, crown her inestimable life with many years to come; and crown each year with additional grace and redoubled happiness!—After dinner, removed, for good, from Fen-Ottery to Broad Hembury: where, being arrived, I spent the evening in a comfortable frame of soul; humbly trusting that the God and guide of my life, who fixeth the bounds of our habitations below, will, himself, vouchsafe to be the dwelling place of my soul, here and ever. At night, there was some thunder: during which, especially, I was favoured with a sweetly awful sense of God's majesty and love. How happy, O Lord, is the soul which is enabled to wrap itself in thee!

Friday, 6. Enjoyed the peace of God to-day: particularly at night, before bed-time: when my communion with the Father of Spirits was near and sweet. I could indeed say, "My Lord, my love, my all!"

Saturday, 7. Was occasionally comforted from above. Blessed, O God, unutterably blessed, is the man whom thou chusest, and causest to approach unto thee! Thy secret is with me; and thou hast shewn me thy covenant.

Sunday, 8. In the morning, read prayers, and read the Thirty-nine Articles, and the declaration of conformity. In the afternoon, read prayers, and preached, to a very large congregation. Between morning and afternoon service, I experienced much of God's presence alone in my study, while revising the sermon I intended to preach. My comforts and joy did not only flow as a river, but rose like the waves of the sea.—In the evening read Turretin's *Theologia*: true is that great author's observation, and most happily expressed, "*αθανασία, fides est fundamentum*"



*damentum eubanasias.*" Read also Dr. Sibbes's "Soul's Conflict:" in which the following observations are equally important, certain, and comfortable:

"The angel troubled the waters, which then cured those that stept in: it is also Christ's manner to trouble our souls first, and then to come with healing in his wings.—As for crosses, he doth but cast us down, to raise us up; and empty us that he may fill us: and melt us that we may be vessels of glory: loving us as well, in the furnace, as when we are out; and standing by us all the while.—In the worst condition, the church hath two faces: one towards heaven and Christ, which is always constant and glorious; another towards the world, which is, in appearance, contemptible and changeable.—In all storms, there is sea-room enough, in the infinite goodness of God, for faith to be carried with full sail.—Places and conditions are happy or miserable, as God vouchsafeth his gracious presence more or less.—God is nearest to his children when he seems furthest off.—It is as natural for sin to raise doubts and fears in the conscience, as for rotten flesh and wood to breed worms. Sin, like Acan in the camp, or Jonas in the ship, is that which causeth storms within and without.—Of all troubles, the trouble of a proud heart is the greatest.—The greater part of our troubles we pull upon ourselves, by not parting our care so as to take upon us only the care of duty, and leave the rest to God; and by mingling our passions with our crosses; and, like a foolish patient, chewing the pills which we should swallow down."

Tuesday, 10. Whilst taking my evening walk, by myself, on the hill that overlooks this village, and surveying the lovely vales that lie beneath on either hand, the Lord melted me into gratitude and praise. I was not alone; for the great Father of all was with me.—On my return wrote part of a sermon after supper, on 2 Cor. v. 8. and my peace and joy in believing were great.

Sunday, 15. In the morning rode to Sheldon; where



where I read prayers and preached to a very attentive congregation: a small church, but well filled. After service, returned home to Broad-Hembury; where, in the afternoon, I read prayers and preached to a great auditory: and the Lord was with me in an especial manner. Spent the evening very comfortably and profitably, in writing part of a sermon. At night those words dwelt much upon my mind, and were greatly blest to me, "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul:" through the influence of his good spirit, I could see and rejoice in God as my portion indeed.

Sunday, 22. Whitsunday. In the morning read prayers, preached, and administered the holy sacrament to thirty-six communicants. In the afternoon read prayers and preached, to a very large congregation. I trust the ordinances were blest to some: but, as to myself, I can only say, that I went through the duties of the day with strength, ease, and presence of mind. I desire to be thankful for this: yet am grieved, that I was not more fervent in spirit, and higher on the mount of divine love. I could ever wish to be

"Like the rapt seraph that adores and burns."

Fain would I mount; fain would I glow;

And loose my cable from below:

But I can only spread my sail;

Thou, thou must breathe th' auspicious gale!

Friday, 27. Notwithstanding my aggravated sinfulness and my absolute unworthiness, God gave me this night, to drink of his consolations, as from a river. "Pardon and sanctification," was my prayer: "Mercy, pardon and salvation," was the gracious answer.

Saturday, 28. This evening I was enabled to rejoice in spirit. God gave me not only a good hope in his grace, but the assurance of faith. Finished a sermon on Rev. ii. 17. I do think and trust that I can say, that text is verified in me, even me a sinner. Through the blood of the Lamb, I believe that



that I shall overcome: I am often fed with the hidden manna of communion with God; there are times when I can set to my seal, that the white stone of absolution and justification is mine: and that I have the new name, the privilege of adoption into the invisible family of God: the consciousness of which is attended with such comfort as is only known to them that receive it. To Father, Son and Spirit, be all the glory!

Sunday, 29. Read prayers and preached, morning and afternoon, to a much larger congregation, both times, than I expected, considering the wetness of the weather. God has watered the earth to-day with his rain, which has been, for some time, greatly wanted: but the spiritual shower of divine love did not descend upon my soul until I retired to my study, this evening, after family prayer. I had then some short, but comfortable, intercourse with God. An observation which I met with to-day, in reading Downname's "Christian Warfare," struck me much; speaking of the Holy Spirit as the sealer of the elect, he asks, "How is it possible to receive the seal without feeling the impression?" O that I might feel it more and more!

June 5. Sunday. This morning I read prayers and preached, to a large congregation; and in the afternoon, to a very large one. My God was present with me both times: and I trust, I have reason to hope, that my labour was not in vain in the Lord. Visited and prayed with farmer William Taylor, twice to-day. The first time, particularly, I had great freedom of speech, in conversing with him on spiritual matters. He has, probably, not many days to live; and, I would hope, is not without some sense of divine things. Visited also, and prayed with Edward Granger: a very ignorant person, and full of what are called good resolutions, if God should restore him again to health. It is a melancholy thing that, in a Protestant country, a minister should have so much ignorance to combat with in most of



of the common people. I thank thee, Holy Father, if I am, in any measure, enlightened into the knowledge of thee; and beseech thee to make me an instrument, in thy hand, of giving light to others, so far as my little sphere extends. Was, through grace, very comfortable in my own soul, several times this day.

Thursday, 9. In the morning visited and prayed with farmer William Taylor. One thing, which he said, I took notice of with satisfaction: his words were, "My pains are nothing to my hopes." Dined and drank tea at Grange. At night, after my return from thence, I was happy in the Lord. I was enabled, from a sense of interest in Christ, to sing those sweet lines,

"Jesus, thou art my righteousness,  
"For all my sins were thine, &c."

Sunday, 12. Read prayers and preached, morning and afternoon. Might I judge of what others felt by the comfortable enlargement I experienced myself, both parts of the day, I should trust that the arm of the Lord was revealed. The afternoon audience was very great: and God was with me of a truth. A door of knowledge and of utterance was opened to me: and I humbly hope, God opened to himself a door into the hearts of some that heard. I cannot forbear observing, that last night, and to-day, the Lord gave me some special assurances of his being with me in the discharge of the public duties of this sabbath: and his gracious intimations were verified indeed. The promises of man frequently exceed the performance; but God's performance exceeds even his promises.

Saturday, 18. All day at home. Wrote several hymns; and, while writing that, which begins thus: "When faith's alert, and hope shines clear," &c. I was, through grace, very comfortable in my soul: so, indeed, I have been the whole day. Read Bishop Hopkins's Work, which were sent me from Exeter yesterday,



yesterday, with much spiritual improvement. From morning until now, *i. e.* until eleven at night, I have enjoyed a continual feast within. Christ has been unspeakably precious to my heart, and the blessed spirit of God has visited me with sweet and reviving manifestations. Temptations of a particular kind, beset me more than once; but the Lord lifted up his standard, and I fell not; the gates of hell attacked me, but did not prevail against the grace of God which was with me. Glory be to God on high, who spreads a table for me in the wilderness, making me to banquet on his love; and who has caused my cup of joy to overflow this day. Yea, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord, and be myself his house for ever.

Sunday, 19. Though somewhat out of order in the morning, God carried me well through the duties of the day. Read prayers and preached, twice, as usual. In the afternoon the congregation was very large. This has not been such a rejoicing day, to my own soul as yesterday was; but, I trust, the word preached was not powerless altogether. Yet this, I fear, I can truly say, that my lot has never hitherto been cast among a people so generally ignorant of divine things, and so totally dead to God. I know of but three persons, in all this large and populous parish, on whom I have solid reason to trust, a work of saving grace is begun: and these are, Mrs. Hutchins, farmer William Taylor, and Joan Venn. But this I verily believe, that, if God had not some elect souls to call, he would not have sent me hither. When vicar of Harpford, I laboured among that people for a great part of two years, before I could perceive a sensible out-pouring of God's Holy Spirit upon them: and yet, before I left them, God seemed to have owned my ministry in a very great and unexpected manner. Lord grant, if it please thee, that I may have the same consolation here!

Wednesday, 22. Calling on Mrs. Hutchins this evening, I found Joan Venn there, from whom I  
had



had the comfort of hearing that my unworthy ministry has, in general, been attended with great power to her soul: but, above all, on the 24th of last April, in the afternoon, under that sermon from Psalm xxxii. 1. Lord, carry on thy work in her soul and mine, to the day of Christ!

Friday, 24. Visited and prayed with Sarah Granger. In the evening had a very comfortable interview with old farmer William Taylor, who, though better than I ever expected to see him, is not, in all probability, far from the invisible world. God enabled me to pray with him extempore; and I never yet saw him so affected. If the Lord gives ability, I think to lay aside forms of prayer in my future attendance on the sick. I generally find that prayer, on these occasions, offered up as God gives utterance, is more blest to the souls I attend upon, as well as to my own. Lord, may thy good spirit, which maketh intercession in thy saints, be ever present with me, to help my infirmities, and teach me to pray as I ought. There are, certainly, particular exigencies and cases, which few if any prescribed form can reach. With regard to this, and every other part of my duty as a minister, my help standeth in the name of the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth. I only wish that my natural diffidence was less, and my faith greater!

Sunday, 26. A sabbath of joy and blessing. Was somewhat cast down last night, and early this morning, at the prospect of the public duties lying before me, as I have been, for some days past, troubled with a cough, which grows upon me more and more. But God heard my petitions, and was better to me than my expectations. I read prayers and preached in the morning, to a large congregation; and, in the afternoon, to an exceeding full one; with unusual freedom of utterance and strength of body, both times. After morning service visited and prayed with Sarah Granger. In prayer she was quite melted down, and wept greatly. God gave me both  
words



words and matter suitable to her case. In the evening, visited and prayed with farmer William Taylor: and on this occasion too, I was enabled to pray with much liberty of speech, and comfort to myself. In the course of our conversation he told me that, "Being alone yesterday evening, and begging of God to hearken to his supplications, he thought he heard a voice say, "I will hear thy prayers:" and that his hope of acceptance has been ever since, greater than usual." How this really was I dare not say: but would chuse to suspend my judgment about it. This, however, I am glad to observe in him, namely, that he is most earnestly desirous of gaining the assurance of his justification. Surely, if the foundation of true faith was not laid in his soul, he would hardly be so desirous of having the top-stone brought forth with joy. At night, finished a short morning sermon, which I began yesterday, on 1 Kings, xvii. 21.

Tuesday, 28. In my way to Grange (where I dined and spent the evening), visited Sarah Granger. I found her surrounded with weeping friends and relatives, and herself little more than alive, in point of bodily strength, but perfectly sensible. My mouth was opened to speak much, and pertinently to her case: and the Lord gave me very great freedom, enlargement, and warmth in prayer. I hope it was made a season of blessing both to her and to those who were present, as, through grace, it was to myself. She strongly, and in a most affecting manner, requested me to have an eye over her children, when she was dead and gone, and to do what I could in furthering them in the way to the kingdom of God. I assured her, that nothing in my power should be wanting, if I lived, which might conduce to their spiritual or temporal welfare.

Friday, July 1. Drinking tea this afternoon, at Priory, we were surprised with a very unexpected storm of rain, thunder, and lightning. The flashes were so frequent, and so very violent, that Mrs. Sydenham



denham proposed shutting the windows, letting down the curtains, and having candles brought in: which was done accordingly. I dropt an intimation of my readiness to go to prayer: but the hint was not accepted. After about two hours the weather being fair again, I took that opportunity of returning home to Broad-Hembury. On my way, the thunder and lightning were renewed; but there being no rain I kept on: and, blessed be God's good providence, arrived safe at the vicarage. The Lord preserved me from a slavish fear: but I felt a very desirable awe on my mind, even such as I would always wish to feel on such a commanding occasion. I conversed much with God in mental prayer, and desire to bless his name, that the awful manifestations of his power were not commissioned either to hurt or destroy. I have heard much louder thunder; but never, I believe, saw such prodigious lightning: except my being more exposed to it, than I ever was before, makes me think so. Thou, O Lord, commandest the waters; it is the glorious God, who maketh the thunder: and (adored be the riches of thy mercy) it was thou, who didst bid the lightnings alarm, but prohibit them to strike. O take me, and seal me thine for ever!

Saturday, 2. God gave, this night, some very express and comfortable assurances of his blessing me in the course of the public duties to-morrow. Lord, I humble say, Amen; I beg that it may be so; I believe that it will be so.

Sunday, 3. Early this morning took horse for Fen-Ottery; where being arrived, I went to captain Penney's. After being with him about half an hour, we walked to Church. As we were going, the captain suddenly took hold of my left arm: I, imagining he might have something particular to say to me, went closer to him; when he fell on me, with all his weight. At first, I supposed he might have stumbled, and lost his footing: but was alarmed, when I found him continue motionless in my arms. In less than half a minute,



minute he came to himself, and was as well as ever. It seems, he has, several times before, been struck in a similar manner: and, had I not been by his side, he must have fallen prostrate. O that he may, in this his day, know the things that belong to his everlasting peace, before they are hid from his eyes! Being come to the Church, I read prayers, and then preached, with very great enlargement and liberty both of mind and utterance. If I might judge by the tears, which some shed, under the word preached (and, indeed, I myself did with great difficulty refrain from weeping, toward the conclusion), the message of salvation seemed to be attended with power. After dinner, rode to Harford; where I read prayers, and preached, to a very great congregation. Though my cough was somewhat troublesome, at intervals; I detained my old audience for fifty minutes, and great was my strength of voice, and fervour of spirit: nor less, their attention. After drinking tea at farmer Carter's, I returned to Fen-Ottery; where I lay at Captain Penney's.

Upon a retrospective view of this Lord's day, I find abundant reason to adore, admire, and praise the goodness of God. Mr. Luce's being at Plymouth, rendered it necessary for me, as a friend, to assist him, by officiating at his Churches: and the Lord has been very gracious to me in my unworthy ministrations. I have had also, the additional satisfaction of delivering the tidings of peace and salvation to a people of whom I had, lately, the charge, and whom I affectionately love in the Lord. Thou God of all grace, command thy omnipotent blessing on what they have heard!

Tuesday, 5. Lying at Otterton last night, I took an airing, this morning, with Mr. Duke, in his coach, to Budleigh, Knowle, Tidwell, and Salterton; and the Lord enabled me, at times, to hold comfortable communion with himself by the way.

Saturday, 9. The merciful and gracious Lord was sensibly with me, the latter part of to-day.—“Awake and sing,” and, presently after, “Arise and shine,”



were spoke to my soul, from above, with power and sweetness.

Late at night, God was again pleased to give me the knowledge of a sabbath-day's blessing to-morrow. Such comfortable and peremptory convictions of God's future presence and support on a succeeding Sunday (with which I have been so often favoured beforehand) I intend, henceforth, as often as God is pleased to grant them to distinguish by the name of Saturday-Assurances. Assurances they are indeed: so clear, positive, and satisfactory. I never knew them once fail, or deceive my trust. I have often been dejected and fearful, at the approach of a sabbath on which I was to minister publicly: and God has frequently, not to say generally, been better to me than my unbelieving fears; but, on those happy days (and, blessed be his name, they have, of late especially, been very many) when previous assurances have been given me of his help and presence on the Sunday following, those assurances have always been made good. The Lord has often disappointed my doubts, and the evil surmisings of unbelief; but he never once disappointed my hope, when he has said previously to my soul, "I will be with thee."

Sunday, 10. God has made this a comfortable sabbath indeed. In the morning, read prayers and preached to a considerable congregation; and, in the afternoon, to an exceeding great one: with great readiness, strength, and presence of mind, each time. In the evening, God delivered me out of a grievous temptation, and saved me from falling by it. Visited and prayed with Sarah Granger. I was heartily glad to find that the Lord has made her sensible of the deceitfulness of her heart. Her fears that she is not sincerely earnest in seeking God, and to use her own expression, in her "longings after the Lord Jesus;" are to me, favourable signs of her being so. In praying with her, God gave me enlargement of mind, and great freedom of speech. Visited old Mrs. Hutchins: who longs for the assurance of faith; but whose fear of death rather increases,



increases, than abates: I was enabled to speak a word in season; and trust, it was not wholly in vain in the Lord. At night read Polhill's Treatise (late the property of the excellent Mr. Pearsall), entitled, "Precious Faith." It is a precious book, and on a precious subject.

Friday, 15. God shone upon my soul greatly this evening.

Sunday, 17. In the morning, read prayers, and preached; but not with that sensible comfort which I sometimes enjoy. In the afternoon, Mr. Savery was so kind as to read prayers and preach in my stead. My cough was rather troublesome to-day. After evening service, I was much cheered and refreshed in soul, while reading Mr. Erskine's sermon, entitled, "Faith's Plea on God's Word and Covenant."

Sunday, 24. In the morning, rode to Sheldon; where I read prayers and preached. Returning thence, I read prayers and preached here, at Broad-Hembury, in the afternoon, with uncommon strength and liveliness, and to the largest congregation I have yet seen in this place. Blessed be the God of all comfort, for the distinguished mercies of this delightful sabbath. I was carried, through the duties of it, as on eagle's wings; and, amidst the vast auditory, the word preached seemed to reach some hearts with power and the demonstration of the Spirit. May it be fastened, as a nail in a sure place, and be found after many days!

Sunday, 31. Read prayers, and preached, both morning and afternoon, with strength and some liveliness; but with little spiritual joy.

At night, was visited with some tastes of comfort, and with the sweet rays of my heavenly Father's countenance, in reading Erskine's sermons. Read likewise, not without sensible improvement, some part of the acts of the synod of Dort: particularly, the judgement of the British divines, "*De Perseverantia Sanctorum*".



Saturday, August 6. Was much dejected in soul to-night: but, in seeking the Lord, received some comfortable intimations.

Sunday, 7. In the morning road to Plymtree; where I read prayers, and preached, with very great freedom, strength, and enlargement, to a serious, attentive congregation: some of whom seemed to experience as much of the Holy Spirit's power, as I did. After dining at Mr. Harward's, I returned to Broad Hembury: where I read prayers and preached, to a prodigious full Church, with equal fervour and liberty both of mind and utterance, as in the morning. I can never enough adore thy goodness, O thou God of all grace!

Monday, 8. I cannot help noting, to my shame, and as a mark of my exceeding depravity, that, after all the Lord's Sabbath-day's mercies to me yesterday, I was never, that I know of, more cold, lifeless, and wandering, then I was in secret prayer last night, just before going to bed. Pardon, dearest Lord, my want of love! Alas, if I loved thee more, I should serve thee better.—During the course of the present day, God gave me some very humbling and instructing views of myself. Abstracted from special, efficacious grace, nothingness, (or, if any thing, utter sinfulness) may be written on all I have, and am, and do. Blessed be God, that I have some ground to hope myself interested in a better righteousness than my own!

Sunday, 14. Read prayers, and preached, morning and afternoon. Was, in general, greatly depressed in soul, this day: but not so much, during the seasons of public worship, as before and after. In the evening, and at night, my heart aspired to God with groanings that cannot be uttered. Yet, while reading Whitty's Sermons, I experienced a great degree of divine power, and now and then, some sweetness; but I could not rejoice in the Lord: nor is it fit, that such a sinner always should. Deal with me



me, O God, as thou wilt ; but O seal me to the day of redemption, and make me be found in the number of thine at last !

Thursday, 18. At Exeter, to-day, I spent some time with that excellent Christian, good old Mr. Brewer : and, in the course of our conversation, I experienced much of the divine presence. Among other matters, he mentioned some particulars, spoke in a charge lately given at the ordination of a young dissenting minister : which I put down here, as they are too good to be lost. “ I cannot conclude, ” said the old ambassador of Christ, “ without reminding you, my young brother, of some things that may be of use to you, in the course of your ministry. 1. Preached Christ crucified, and dwell chiefly on the blessings resulting from his righteousness, atonement, and intercession. 2. Avoid all needless controversies, in the pulpit ; except it be, when your subject necessarily requires it ; or when the truths of God are likely to suffer by your silence. 3. When you ascend the pulpit, leave your learning behind you : endeavour to preach more to the hearts of your people, than to their heads. 4. Do not affect too much oratory. Seek rather to profit, than to be admired.” In the afternoon, returned to Broad-Hembury.

Sunday, 21. In the morning, attended my friend, Mr. Savery, to Sheldon ; where he read prayers and preached. Returned, by dinner, to Broad-Hembury, where I read prayers, and preached, in the afternoon, to a large congregation, with a spirit and life, that seemed to reach the hearts of most present. It was a Sabbath-day's blessing indeed. Surely, nothing but heaven itself can exceed such a golden opportunity ! Bless the Lord, O my soul ; and all that is within me, praise his holy name !

Saturday, 27. In secret prayer, to night, God give me a Saturday-assurance of a blessing to-morrow : and I was enabled to believe that it would be unto me, even as the Lord had said.

Sunday, 28. Read prayers, and preached, both parts



parts of the day, with uncommon strength of body, and with vast enlargement of soul. Between morning and afternoon service, being in my study, and comfortably engaged in secret prayer, the Lord visited me with a refreshing shower of divine love: so that my soul was like a watered garden. I never felt so intense a desire to be useful to the souls of my people; my heart was expanded, and burnt with zeal, for the glory of God, and for the spiritual welfare of my flock. I wished to spend and be spent in the ministry of the word; and had some gracious assurances from on high, that God would make use of me to diffuse his gospel, and call in some of his chosen that are yet unconverted.— In the afternoon, the congregation was exceeding great indeed. I was all on fire for God; and the fire, I verily believe, caught from heart to heart.—I am astonished, when I review the blessings of this Lord's Day. That a sinner so vile, so feeble, so ill, and so hell-deserving, should be thus powerfully carried beyond himself, and be enabled to preach with such demonstration of the spirit. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach, among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ. Lord, let thy word run, and be glorified! Out of weakness, I am made strong: to thy name alone be the entire praise! And go on, O go on, to own the counsel of thy unworthiest messenger, and to make the feet of him that sent me sound behind me! Thy mercies to me, both as a man, as a believer, and as a minister, have already been so wonderful, that there is hardly any thing too great for me to hope for at thy hands.

Monday, 29. This evening, after my return from Grange, God was very gracious to my soul. My meditation of him was sweet, and he gave me songs in the night season. I had sweet, melting views of his special goodness, and of my own utter unworthiness. The united sense of these two, keeps the soul in an even balance. I am then happiest, as well as safest, when my very exaltations lay me lowest.

Wednesday,



Wednesday, 31. Writing, this afternoon, to Mrs Browne, of Bath, I could not help enumerating some of God's chief mercies to me, both in a way of providence and grace, since I saw her last. Among other things, I observed as follows: "God has also given me, in general, a much greater portion of health and strength, than usual; and crowned his other mercies, by enabling me to dispense his gospel, for the most part, with a liveliness and fervour, which I have seldom experienced for so long a time together.—I sing, and ought to sing, of mercy and loving kindness. I can indeed set up my Ebenezer; erect a monument of thankfulness; and inscribe every separate blessing with David's motto, *This hath God done.* May his grace lay me low at his footstool, as a Christian; and his almighty spirit command success on my unworthy labours, as a minister!—The Lord go on to make you, madam, happy in his love, and an instrument of extensive good to his people below. In the exercise of the grace he has given you, and in the discharge of the duties he has allotted to you, may your joy and peace flourish as the lily, and your comforts cast forth the root as Lebanon. Amid all your bodily complaints, may his strength be perfected in your weakness, and his right-hand sustain you; until, by the blood of atonement, and the faithful guidance of his spirit, he has brought you to that land of light and rest and joy, where the glorified inhabitant shall no more, in any sense whatever, say, *I am sick.*—I propose, if Providence permit, to set out for London, the latter end of September; where I hope to spend the ensuing winter with my honoured mother: happy should I be, in the mean while, to hear, that your health is at least no worse than usual.—I rejoice to find, from several gentlemen of Dorsetshire, that Mr. ———'s health is greatly improved. I have not taken the liberty of writing to him, since last March was twelve-month; one reason of which is, lest he should think I had any interested views to serve: which, I am sure, is very far from being the case; my present



living being vastly more eligible than any of which my honoured friend is patron. When you send next to Frampton, you will oblige me in condescending to mention my name, and tendering my most respectful compliments.—My affectionate remembrance, and best wishes, attend the three young gentlemen, your nephews; nor can I give a sincerer proof of both, than by praying, that they may flourish as olive branches in the courts of the Lord's house; be made wise unto salvation, by his spirit; and increase with the increase of God.—Mr. and Mrs. Derham have my affectionate compliments; they may wonder, perhaps, that I have not done myself the pleasure of writing to them; but dear Mrs. D. deserves only a scolding letter (if I could find in my heart to send her such an one), for leaving London, last autumn, without seeing me though she knew I was then in town: and the friend, at whose house she was, and who informed me afterwards of these particulars, was engaged to drink tea with me the very day Mrs. Derham set out for Bath."

Friday, September 2. Received, this morning, a letter from a gospel friend; informing, me, that Mr. Morris, of the county of Wexford, in Ireland (whose ministry was, a little turned of twelve years ago, blest to my conversion), is waxing cold in the work of the Lord. Upon which, I thought it a debt due to friendship, and to the cause of God, to write him the following letter.

*To Mr. Morris.*

*Broad-Hembury, near Honiton, Devonsh. Sept. 2, 1768.*

It is now above eight years since I saw, or heard from, my ever dear Mr. Morris. The Lord knows you are near my heart, and are often present to my thoughts. God grant that this letter may find my valued friend as well in body, and as lively in soul, as when I saw him last!

I have



I have been in orders between six and seven years ; and now write to you from my living. The spirit of God has kept me stedfast in his glorious truths, and given me much joy and peace in believing. I trust, too, that my labours, as a minister, have been owned from above, to the calling in of some chosen vessels, and to the consolation of others who were, before, quickened from their death in trespasses and sins : which I mention to the praise of the glory of his grace, who vouchsafes to make use of the meanest, the feeblest, and the unworthiest instruments, to accomplish his designs of love towards those he delights to save.—Whilst I am writing, the fire kindles in my soul : may it reach your heart, when this letter reaches your hands. I am, at present, high on the mount of divine love, and can sing with the church, Isa. lxi. 10. “ I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,” &c.—How is it with you? Are you as zealous for Christ, and for souls, as when God made you the means of my conversion twelve years ago? O that the Lord would rend the heavens, and come down, and set you all in a flame for himself! Permit your spiritual Son to remind you of the sweet, the memorable days and months that are past. Indeed, and indeed, I love you tenderly, in the bowels of Jesus Christ. How has my heart burnt within me, and how have my tears flowed, like water from the smitten rock, when I have heard you preach the unsearchable riches of his grace, blood, and righteousness! The word came with power, and with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. And is it true, can it be possible, that you should cease from your work of calling sinners to repentance? Do you withdraw your hand from the gospel-plough, after God has made it prosper so long in your hands? I am told so; but I cannot believe it. O man of God, stir up the gift that is in thee: let it not rust and moulder, by lying useless. The Lord hath often spoke to me by your mouth: Oh, that he would now speak to you by my pen! Do, at my request, meet  
the



the dear people of C. and who knows but there may, once more, be showers of blessing? Blow the trumpet in Zion, as heretofore. While life and health and strength continue, let your feet stand upon the mountains, and the law of gospel-kindness dwell upon your tongue, to the very last: yea, let your lips feed many.—Adieu. I scarce know how to leave off, when I write to any of my brethren in the faith. If even the poor, feeble, mortal saints below, love one another so well: no wonder that the love of an infinite God to his own dear elect, should be from everlasting to everlasting.—Electing, justifying, regenerating, sanctifying, and persevering grace, have been, and are, the subjects of my ministry: and, I hope will be, to my latest breath. If a messenger of Christ is under the lively experimental influence of these glorious truths; the word of his master will be as fire in his bones: yea, he will be in pangs, as it were, like a woman in travail, until Christ is formed in the hearts of them that hear. God Almighty pour out such a spirit of fervency on my dear Mr. Morris, and on his

Ever affectionate friend,

AUGUSTUS TOPLADY.

Saturday, 3. God was graciously pleased, this night, to give me an assurance of his blessing on the public work of to-morrow. How tenderly and bountifully does the Father of consolations deal with his sinful messenger! Surely, doubting is doubly a sin in me!

Sunday, 4. In the morning rode to Sheldon; where I was enabled to read prayers and preach with great comfort to myself, and, I have reason to hope, with power to them that heard. On my return, being part of the way over Hembercome (more properly, Hembury Common), a most violent storm of rain obliged me to turn back, and take shelter at Richard Lane's. After half an hour's stop there, I returned



returned to Broad-Hembury; where, in the afternoon, I read prayers and preached, with the greatest freedom and fervour, to a most attentive and (in appearance) affected congregation. Wet as the afternoon has proved a great number of strangers were at church; and I verily think, the presence and power of God was amongst us.—After service, good old Mrs. Hutchins, and Joan Venn, drank coffee with me at the vicarage. Our conversation was, for the most part, savory and comfortable.—Was rejoiced to hear, that the word of God from my lips has been greatly blest of late to those two persons; to Farmer Copp, and his eldest son; to old Mr. Thomas Granger, Farmer Smith, and several other of my parishioners.—Since I came down last into Devonshire from London (*i. e.* not quite a twelve-month ago), God has owned my ministry more than ever: particularly at Harpford, and here. Blessed Lord, the work is thine alone. Go on, I most humbly beseech thee, to speak to the hearts of sinners, by the meanest mouth that ever blew the trumpet in Zion!—At night I was much comforted in spirit, in reading bishop Beveridge's Private Thoughts.

Monday, 5. Had some sweet, refreshing intercourse with God several times to-day.—Upon a review of my experience during the former part of last year, and occasionally in the course of the present, I cannot help observing, that great humiliations are often the best preparatives for ministerial usefulness.

Saturday, 10. God refreshed and satisfied my soul to-night, with a Saturday's assurance. "I have blest thee, and will bless thee again," was the answer I received.

Sunday, 11. In reading prayers, and in preaching, the Lord was signally with me both parts of the day. In the afternoon, especially, the word, I verily trust, went forth with power and was glorified.

Saturday, 17. Received some satisfactory and comfortable



comfortable intimations of a Sabbath-day's blessing to-morrow. Surely, the Lord is indeed good to them that wait for him, and to the soul that seeketh him!

Sunday, 18. Read prayers and preached, morning and afternoon, with very great fervour, strength, and enlargement. That God is doing his work of grace upon the hearts of some, I have all the proof, both public and private, that the nature of the case will admit of. The Lord hath been to my soul this day, both in my study, and in the temple, a place of broad rivers and streams.

This evening I met with a paragraph from archbishop Usher, which well deserves to be entered here. "I must tell you," says the excellent prelate, as my author relates it, "that we do not well understand what sanctification and the new creature are: It is no less than for a man to be brought to an entire resignation of his will to the will of God; and to live in the offering up of his soul continually, in the flames of love, as an whole burnt-offering to Christ." I trust, I have experienced and do frequently experience, something of this blessed work, in myself: Lord, make the little one become a thousand!

Saturday, 24. Dined at Ottery to-day, at Mr. Dare's. Our conversation turned partly on historical, partly on religious subjects. We talked particularly on the nature of regeneration: and I took occasion, among other things, to observe, that the whole process of the new-birth seems included in that three-fold conviction, mentioned by our Lord, and declared by him to be the office of the Holy Ghost: namely, conviction of sin, or of our total depravity by nature and practice; of the impossibility of our being justified by works; of our liableness to the whole curse of the law; and our absolute inability to help, save, or recover ourselves, whether in whole or in part: 2. Conviction of Righteousness, *i. e.* of the perfection, necessity, and efficacy of Christ's righteousness, in order to justification before God: 3. Conviction



Conviction of Judgment, or that act of the Holy Spirit on the soul, whereby “the prince of this world is judged;” brought, as it were, to the bar; found guilty of usurpation; and dethroned: from which happy moment, the sinner is brought into sweet subjection to God, his lawful sovereign, sin is weakened as to its dominion (in order to its final extirpation), and the regenerate soul is more and more conformed to the image of God’s holiness. So that, I suppose, conviction of sin is only another name for evangelical repentance; conviction of righteousness, for true faith in Christ; and conviction of judgment, a periphrasis for sanctification: which three capital graces are the constituents of regeneration—Toward evening returned to Broad-Hembury.

Sunday, 25. In the morning read prayers and preached: and the power of God appeared to accompany the word spoken. Young Mr. Minifie, in particular, was, I am informed, greatly affected from above. In the afternoon the congregation was by far the greatest I ever yet saw here: the people flocked like doves to the windows; and such an auditory, and that auditory so solemn and attentive, was a most awful and affecting sight. I read prayers, and preached, with a fervour, strength, and liveliness, which only God could give. His word seems to run like fire which none can quench. Lord, pardon my unworthiness, and accomplish the work of thy grace upon the hearts of them that hear, and on the base, sinful heart of me the feeblest and most undeserving of thy messengers!—After evening service, Mary Ellis called on me. If ever a soul was truly convinced of sin, I believe she is so. I endeavoured to administer balm to her wounded spirit, by opening up the promises, and unfolding a little of the unsearchable riches of Christ.—This morning, as I was going to church, Joan Venn put a paper into my hands. Last Tuesday she gave me an account of God’s past dealings with her soul: and I have seldom seen a person, of the truth of whose conversion I had



so little cause to doubt. In consequence of our interview that day, she has had some exercises of mind, as I find from this paper, which, omitting what relates to my unworthy self, runs thus: "I have had very deep thoughts, and very great trouble, since my last discourse with you. I have looked into my life past; I have ransacked my soul, and called to mind the sinful failings of my youth: and I find it very hard and difficult, to make my calling and election sure. I have earnestly desired to leave no corner of my soul unsearched; and I find myself a very grievous and wretched sinner. I have committed grievous sins, very grievous sins, such sins as are not fit to be named before God's saints. I have examined my soul by each particular commandment, and find myself guilty of the breach of all, and that in an high degree. And now, when I look upon the glass of the law, and there see my own vileness, I find God's justice and my own deserts even ready to surprise me and cast me down into the nethermost hell, and that most righteously: but O, see the goodness of a gracious God, in that he hath given me a sight of my sins! And I am inclined to think, that, if God did not work with me, this sorrow could not be. O, sir, I cannot but let you know, that sometimes I have some blessed thoughts of God: and O, how sweet are they to my soul! they are so ravishing, that I cannot possibly declare it: but they are like the morning cloud and early dew, soon gone, and then I am afraid. I have had abundance of trials and temptations in these three years almost; but if I could think that my dear Lord had shed his blood for me, I should not be so much shaken: and, because I cannot apply these things to myself, my heart doth mourn within me. I am greatly afraid of the deceitfulness of my heart, lest that should deceive me. But let the righteous smite me, and it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me, and it shall be excellent oil which shall not break my head. O that the Lord Jesus Christ would but sprinkle what I have said, with his precious blood!

And,



And, now I have opened my soul to you, I most humbly beg and desire your advice concerning these weighty matters: for they are matters which concern my never dying soul.—And I have an high esteem for you: but what is my esteem? The esteem of a poor worm: of a poor sinful creature. O that the Lord would let me see, more and more, my own vileness! Now I have declared to you what the Lord, through grace, hath revealed to me; though I am unworthy to write to such," &c.

O that all my parishioners were, not only almost, but altogether such in spirit, as this woman! Illiterate she is, and, I believe, chiefly supports herself by spinning: but when God teaches, souls are taught indeed.

October 2. Sunday. In the morning read prayers, and preached, to a large and affected auditory: afterwards, I administered the blessed sacrament. Last Whitsunday, I had but thirty-six communicants: to-day, I had the comfort of counting sixty-one. It was a season of spiritual joy and refreshment. Duty is pleasant, when God is present.—In the afternoon read prayers, and preached, to a still more crowded Church than ever. Great were my strength and joy in the Lord: and the word, I verily trust, was armed with divine power. Mr. Pratt, of Dalwood, in Dorsetshire, with two other gentlemen of the same place, were here, both parts of the day.—I know not that I ever spent a more comfortable and triumphant Sabbath. How is it, O thou God of love, that thy tender mercies should thus accompany and follow the vilest sinner out of hell! That to me, who am less than the least of all saints, this grace should be given, that I should both experience and preach the unsearchable riches of Christ!

Monday, 3. Good Mr. Bampffield, of Sheldon, called on me this morning; and our conversation, though short, was chiefly on the best subjects.—Having been informed, yesterday, that Mr. Rutter, a worthy dissenting minister in Honiton, was seized, a few



few days ago, with the palsy, and disabled from the work of the ministry.

December 3. Saturday. Mr. Bottomley, a worthy person, for whom I have a very great esteem, but who has long been an Arminian, put a paper into my hands, last night, at the Queen's Arms, after the club broke up, containing some of his chief objections to the Calvinistic scheme. It is a copy of a letter, sent by him, some time ago, to Mr. Romaine: and runs in an humble, modest style; very different from the bigotry and fury, the abuse and wilful misrepresentations, too usually found in the productions of those who pretend, amidst all, to be advocates for universal love in the Deity; but of which they seldom shew any traces in themselves.

I gave my friend the substance of my thoughts in the following letter.

*To Mr. Bottomley.*

*New-Way, Westminster, Dec. 3, 1768.*

WORTHY SIR,

I HAVE read attentively the paper you condescended to put into my hands; and which I return because I apprehend you meant I should only peruse it. I not only approve, but admire, the modesty with which you write. I pray God I may be enabled more and more to adopt the same truly Christian spirit. And I verily hope and believe, that that most gracious Being who has led you thus far, will go on to translate you farther and farther into the light and liberty of his children.—As I once took occasion to tell you, it is much the same with mistakes in matters of judgment, as it was with the two disciples in the dungeon of Philippi: first, the prison shakes; and next, the doors fly open. I am heartily glad that you are shaken as to the system you have long embraced: and  
trust



trust that it is prelusive to your deliverance from it.—I do not trouble you with my thoughts on the substance of your paper: though I must own, there is not in the whole of it any single exception against the doctrine of predestination, which will not admit of a very easy solution. But I omit attempting this, as the person to whom that letter was particularly addressed, is abundantly more capable than myself of obviating your doubts.—Suffer me, dear sir, to repeat, with all humility, the request I made to you some time ago. Be not hasty in determining your judgment on this most important point. View the question on all sides. Chiefly, keep your eye fixed on the Scriptures: and derive, by humble, earnest, waiting prayer, all your light and knowledge from thence. One thing I am very clear in; that, if you reduce your ideas to the standard of Scripture, and make this the model of those; suffering the unerring word of revelation to have the casting vote, and turning your mind into the gospel mould; you must and will, eventually, throw the idol of Arminianism, in all its branches, to the moles and to the bats; you will no longer dwell with Mesech, nor have your habitation among the tents of Kedar. Having tasted the good old wine of distinguishing grace, you will no longer have any relish for the new scheme of grace without a plan, and of a random-salvation: for you will both know and acknowledge, that the old is better. Hoping to see that happy time, I remain, with great esteem, dear sir,

Your affectionate brother in Christ,

AUGUSTUS TOPLADY.

We have now to take notice of Mr. Toplady, as entering the polemic field, and cannot help viewing him with a mixture of love and admiration. As a writer of true genius he has given scope to his own abilities, and thought as well as read. He has carried a classical taste into subjects which have been too often treated

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in a dry, jejune, and insipid manner. Though the track has been beaten, he has brought out something new on every subject he has entered upon. His style was chaste, animated, simple and grand, and so varied as to suit the different topics he canvassed. He had the peculiarity of spirit to strike off glowing images, and to seize the ridicule of character. The union of strength with elegance and precision, characterises his diction, and entitles him to a distinguished rank amongst theological writers.

There was a singular unhappiness attending our author in meeting with an opponent who should have been passed by in silent pity. The person alluded to was the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, a clergyman ordained in the Church of England, but whose excentric principles, and palpable deviations from his ecclesiastical parent, and from what has been received as sound principle in Protestant Churches, was a peculiar trait in his character. His popularity as an itinerant preacher, by an assiduous perseverance, procured him a considerable number of votaries, who attached themselves to him as their leader. He published several books extracted from the writings of other men, which also conduced to render him conspicuous. His understanding, strictly speaking, was but ordinary. His imagination was fertile in littleness. The reader is disturbed and disgusted by the indistinctness of his ideas, and the inconclusiveness of his reasonings, the glaring misrepresentations and the plagiarisms of his pages. His arguments have been made up of undigested materials, heterogeneous and repugnant, without either shape or form, the frivolousness of their design and application have been completely destroyed by being only set in array against each other. If a prize had been given to dulness, and the most superlative conceit, this gentleman might have started with certainty of triumph. His resentment towards those who differed from him was intense. His self-importance was astonishing, so that no reprehension given, in ever so mild a way, could instruct him.

Those



Those who have taken a cursory review, and unacquainted with the parties, have taken our author's energy for indignation, his spirit for invective, and his reports for passion and outrage, without considering that he unhappily got himself entangled with knavery, hypocrisy, empiricism, together with most extravagant inconsistency. We pretend not that he was impeccable, we acknowledge the ebullitions of a little subacid humour now and then, and that we find him sometimes indulging himself in a flow of witticism, which may appear to the fastidious as bordering upon levity, but what is this but light and shade reciprocally setting off each other? It should be remembered, that those small faults, if they may be called such, are more than compensated, by that great solidity and depth of thought, which like a golden vein runs through the whole of his writings.

Controversial divinity has been held in much disrepute, by the ill-formed zeal with which it has been managed by various disputants. It has often produced a spirit of opposition and rivalry. The setting up of a party, as also bigotted attachments to certain ceremonies, or particular modes of thinking. The naked simplicity of truth has been covered under the shreds and patches of declamation. The result of which has been, that the demon of discord has too often found a place in the very sacred sanctuary, so as to break that cement that unites professing Christians to one another. It has had such a disagreeable aspect to those who have been making a serious inquiry after divine knowledge, as to promote a lassitude and indifference towards the investigation of subjects that are of everlasting importance. Therefore, while on the one hand we reprobate every idea of an unbecoming asperity in things truly trifling, and of no consequence, let it not be supposed, that because strong truths prove offensive to weak eyes, that a minister ought in any degree, by a wretched, dastardly pusillanimity, to be so disingenuous as to make any apology, for not contending earnestly for that faith once delivered to  
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the saints, though it should expose him to the uncandid virulence of habitual dissention.

Mr. Toplady, though so strenuous an advocate for the essentials of Christianity, so as not to recede an iota from his principles, was notwithstanding possessed of enlarged and expanded views. His intimacy and friendship with several valuable characters in the dissenting communion, evidently evinced the generous and liberal sentiments of his breast. The esteem he expressed to those who were engaged in promoting the Redeemer's interest among mankind, how much they may have differed on unimportant topics, they uniformly found in him the urbanity of a gentleman, accompanied with that suavity of disposition, which rendered him agreeable to all who had the happiness of his acquaintance. It was his intention, had his health permitted, to employ his pen in endeavouring to refute opinions advanced by Dr. Priestley, in his book, entitled, "*Disquisitions on Matter and Spirit.*" Though the doctor's theological principles and his, were as opposite as it were possible to conceive, we cannot help anticipating, that if such an intellectual feast had taken place, from the specimen of their correspondence, we should have seen the truest respect given, by Mr. Toplady, to a great genius, and the moral integrity of the man, without sacrificing truth, by a fulsome adulation, or for one moment countenancing those destructive tenets which degrade the person, and annihilate the work of Christ in the redemption of sinners.

We cannot give a greater force to the character of Mr. Toplady respecting his gentleness of mind, and urbanity of manners, than by presenting to the public a letter sent a few months before his death to Dr. Priestley; it will shew, though his theological sentiments were as opposite as contraries possibly could be, yet when he had the gentleman, the scholar, and the man of genius as a competitor, he was then complete master of those due forms of courtsey so necessarily requisite in order to the elucidation of any subject.

To



To the Rev. Dr. Priestley.

Knightsbridge, January 20, 1778.

I am much your debtor, Sir, for your late polite favour from Calne: but, especially, for the obliging present of your *Disquisitions concerning Matter and Spirit*; and of the *Appendix, concerning Necessity*. I have read them, with great attention: and as you condescend to request my opinion of those ingenious pieces; you shall have it, with the most transparent unreserve.

I need not say any thing, as to the article of *Necessity*: because you well know, that I have the honor to coincide, almost entirely with your own view of that great subject. Permit me, however, to ask, *en passant*, in what part of any printed work of mine I “seem to think that the torments of hell will not be eternal?” You yourself, dear Sir, I doubt not, will, on a calm review, be the first to condemn your own *temerity*, in having publicly advanced a conjecture totally unwarranted on my part: and I am equally disposed to believe, that this will be the *last* liberty of the kind, which you will venture to take either with me, or with any other man. You must be sensible, that not a word, on the duration of future punishment, ever past between you and me, either in writing, or in personal converse. Consequently, you must be entirely unacquainted with my ideas of that awful subject: and, as such, was totally unqualified to advance the insinuation, of which I have such just reason to complain.

With regard to your “*Disquisitions*,” &c. I would observe, 1. That I can subscribe to no more than to one moiety of them. I still consider materialism, as equally absurd in itself, and atheistical in it's tendency.

2. But, the perusal of your book gave me no surprise; because I have, for a considerable time past, viewed you as a secret materialist: whose favourite principle,



principle, like the workings of a subterraneous fire, would, at last, break forth into open birth.

3. Nor has this publication lessened, in the smallest degree, my respect and esteem for its author. You have a right to think for yourself; and to publish the result of your thoughts to the world. If my own brother was of a different judgment as to this point, I should set him down for an enemy to the indefeasible prerogatives of human nature.

4. I revere and admire real probity, wherever I see it. Artifice, duplicity, and disguise, I cannot away with. Transparency is, in my opinion, the first and the most valuable of all social virtues. Let a man's principles be black as hell, it matters not to me, so he have but integrity to appear exactly what he is. Give me the person whom I can hold up, as I can a piece of chrysal, and see through him. For this, among many other excellencies, I regard and admire Dr. Priestley.

5. I must acknowledge, Sir, that in the foregoing part of your "*Disquisitions*," you throw no small quantity of light on the nature of *matter* at large. My apprehensions concerning visible substance, are in several important respects corrected and improved by your masterly observations on that subject. I wish you had *stopt* at matter, which you evidently *do* understand, and better, perhaps, than any other philosopher on earth: and not meddled with *spirit*, whose acquaintance, it is very plain, you have not cultivated with equal assiduity.

6. Bishop Berkeley tells me that I am *all spirit*, without a single particle of matter belonging to me. Dr. Priestley, on the other hand, contends that I am *all body*, untenanted and unanimated by any immaterial substance within. Put these two theories together, and what will be the product? That my sum total, and that of every other man, amounts to just nothing at all. I have neither body nor soul; I have no sort of existence whatever.—Here it may be alleged,



leged, "that the two systems cannot be thrown together, as being totally incompatible." I answer: why may not Bishop Berkeley's word go as far as Dr. Priestley's, and the Doctor's as far as the Bishop's? Though, when all is done, the best way, in my opinion, is to cease from both, and believe neither.

7: The arguments for absolute and universal materialism, drawn (or rather pretendedly drawn) from rational and philosophic sources, appear to me prodigiously forced, lame, and inconclusive; and if we take *scripture* into the account, not all the subtilty nor all the violence of criticism will ever be able to establish your system on *that* ground. What wretched work do you yourself make with those few texts which you venture to quote, and strive to obviate, wherein, *plana* and *prima facie*, man is spoken of as a being compounded of matter and spirit!

Can you bear this plain dealing? if you can, give me your hand; and I most heartily wish that all who differ from you, and especially that all who may commence your public antagonists, may treat you as I ever desire to do, with the respect due to your virtues and your talents.

How is your health? Beware of too close application, and of too intense exertions of mind. I, for my own part, can most heartily subscribe to these remarks of the apocryphal writer: "the thoughts of  
" mortal men are miserable, and our devices are but  
" uncertain; for the corruptible body presseth down  
" the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down  
" the mind that museth on many things. Hardly  
" do we guess aright at things that are upon earth;  
" and with labour do we find the things that are  
" before us: but the things which are in heaven who  
" hath searched out? and Thy counsel who hath  
" known, except Thou give wisdom, and send Thy  
" Holy Spirit from above." May that Holy Spirit,  
shining on his written word, and shining into our  
G 4 hearts,



hearts, be a light to the paths of the much-esteemed friend to whom I am writing ; and to the paths of his

Obliged and most obedient servant,

AUGUSTUS TOPLADY.

In order still further to elucidate the expanded benevolence of our author, we will here insert his character of a friend of his in another communion, who was not only a dissenter but a baptist ; the gentleman we allude to was that eminent servant of God Dr. Gill, of whom Mr. Toplady writes in the following elegant, and energetic stile.

If any one man can be supposed to have trod the whole circle of human learning, it was Dr. Gill. His attainments, both in abstruse and polite literature, were (what is very uncommon) equally extensive and profound. Providence had, to this end, endued him with a firmness of constitution, and an unremitting vigour of mind, which rarely fall to the lot of the sedentary and learned. It would, perhaps, try the constitutions of half the literati in England, only to read, with care and attention, the whole of what he wrote.

The Doctor was not one who considered any subject superficially and by halves. As deeply as human sagacity, enlightened by grace, could penetrate, he went to the bottom of every thing he engaged in. With a solidity of judgment, and with an acuteness of discernment, peculiar to few, he exhausted, as it were, the very soul and substance of most arguments he undertook.—His style, too, resembles himself ; it is manly, nervous, plain : conscious, if I may so speak, of the unutterable dignity, value, and importance of the freight it conveys ; it drives directly and perspicuously to the point in view, regardless of affected cadence, and superior to the little niceties of professed refinement.

Perhaps



Perhaps no man, since the days of St. Austin, has written so largely, in the defence of the system of grace; and certainly no man has treated that momentous subject, in all its branches, more closely, judiciously, and successfully. What was said of Edward the Black Prince, that he never fought a battle, which he did not win; what has been remarked of the great Duke of Marlborough, that he never undertook a siege, which he did not carry; may be justly accommodated to our great philosopher and divine: who, so far as the distinguishing doctrines of the Gospel are concerned, never besieged an error, which he did not force from its strong holds; nor ever encountered an adversary, whom he did not baffle and subdue.

His learning and labours, if exceedable, were exceeded only by the invariable sanctity of his life and conversation. From his childhood, to his entrance on the ministry; and, from his entrance on the ministry, to the moment of his dissolution, not one of his most inveterate opposers was ever able to charge him with the least shadow of immorality. Himself, no less than his writings, demonstrated, that the doctrine of grace does not lead to licentiousness.

Those, who had the honor and happiness of being admitted into the number of his friends, can go still farther in their testimony. They know, that his moral demeanor was more than blameless; It was, from first to last, consistently exemplary. And, indeed, an undeviating consistency, both in his views of evangelical truths, and in his obedience, as a servant of God; was one of those qualities, by which his cast of character was eminently marked. He was, in every respect, a burning and shining light; burning with love to God, to truth, and to souls; shining as "an example to believers, in word, in faith, in purity;" a pattern of good works, and a model of all holy conversation and godliness.

The Doctor has been accused of bigotry, by some, who



who were unacquainted with his real temper and character; bigotry may be defined, such a blind and furious attachment to any particular principle, or set of principles, as disposes to wish ill to those persons who differ from us in judgment. Simple bigotry, therefore, is the spirit of persecution without the power; and persecution is no other than bigotry, armed with force, and carrying its malevolence into act. Hence it appears, that to be clearly convinced of certain propositions, as true; and to be steadfast in adhering to them, upon that conviction; nay, to assert and defend those propositions, to the utmost extent of argument; can no more be called bigotry, than the shining of the sun can be termed ostentation. If, in any parts of his controversial writings, the Doctor has been warmed into some little neglects of ceremony towards his assailants, it is to be ascribed, not to bigotry (for he possessed a very large share of benevolence and candour), but to that complexional sensibility, inseparable, perhaps, from human nature in its present state; and from which, it is certain, the Apostles themselves were not exempt.

His doctrinal and practical writings will live, and be admired, and be a standing blessing to posterity, when their opposers are forgot, or only remembered by the refutations he has given them. While true religion and sound learning have a single friend remaining in the British empire, the works and name of Gill will be precious and revered.

May the readers of this inadequate sketch, together with him who (though of a very different denomination from the Doctor) pays this last and unexaggerated tribute of justice to the honoured memory of so excellent a person, participate on earth, and everlastingly celebrate in Heaven, that sovereign grace, which its departed champion so largely experienced—to which he was so distinguished an ornament—and of which he was so able a defender.

In



In the year 1768, six students were expelled the University of Oxford; much investigation relative to the cause took place, and several pamphlets were written on the occasion. It was in some degree the means of reviving an inquiry respecting the Calvinism or Arminianism of the Church of England. Had some of the persons concerned in the dispute adhered to observations and facts, it would have saved much superfluous time, in repeating what others have said again and again before them. For it is undeniable, that to be zealously attached to the Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy of the establishment, the epithet of Calvinist is certain to be prefixed on the character who espouses those doctrines. The name of any man, however highly sanctioned, should be of no avail, in enforcing or determining the belief of any one. We know of no infallible spiritual optimist, it is to the Scriptures every appeal must be made; nevertheless, so far as Calvin, or any other venerable character appear to embrace, and ardently stand forth to maintain the unadulterated system of the Gospel, we have no objection to arrange ourselves under their banners, and to follow them so far as they followed Christ.

Dr. Nowel peremptorily asserted the 'Arminianism of the Church of England in answer to *Pietus Oxoniensis*. This called forth the pen of our author, in a treatise published in the year 1769, with the following title: "The Church of England vindicated from the Charge of Arminianism, in a Letter addressed to Dr. Nowel." He has therein shewn, by the clearest deduction of argument, unconnected with laboured sophistry, or the studied distinctions of the subtilties of the declaimer, on which side the Church leans.

In the same year our author published a tract in English, from the Latin of Jerom Zanchius, with this inscription, "The Doctrine of absolute Predestination stated and asserted, with a Preliminary Discourse on the Divine Attributes, accompanied with



with the *Life of Zanchius*." This piece was finished by Mr. Toplady when he was about twenty years of age, but by a modesty of disposition, bordering upon timidity, it was not announced to the public until nine years after. The translation was undertaken with a view to illustrate the principles of the reformation, and obviate objections that have been urged, that the doctrine of predestination was but partially received by those eminent men, who had then lately left the Church of Rome, at the same time the principles are discussed upon Scripture premises, and in analogy with the divine attributes.

Mr. John Wesley, in a printed sheet of paper, that it might be distributed with the greater facility, endeavoured to impose on the public a few mutilated extracts from the last mentioned pamphlet, signed with the initials of our author's name; the notoriety of such a weak procedure, if it had been left unregarded, would, in time, have shewn the imbecility of the attempt, and proved that uprightness had nothing to do with Mr. Wesley or his principles. It however appeared, to Mr. Toplady, of that consequence, as to call forth his pen on the occasion, in a letter from the press in the year 1776, "To the reverend Mr. John Wesley, relative to his pretended *Abridgment of Zanchius*." A few months after, a second edition was called for, which was enlarged with a postscript to the reverend Mr. Sellon. His sentiments were manly and spirited, conveyed in a close and nervous style.

This publication was succeeded by a discourse preached at St. Ann's Church, Black Friars, entitled, "A Caveat against Unsound Doctrines." Mr. Toplady in this sermon asserts a few of the essential doctrines of revelation that were stigmatised with every opprobrium, he appeals and avows his principles, from the confession of faith asserted in that Church, of which he was a minister. To such who depreciate every system, as the composition of men,  
liable



liable to prejudice and error, and may therefore advance propositions which the Bible will by no means support; he places the Scripture as the grand object, and enforces the doctrines by arguments, solid and incompressible.

Mr. Toplady here presents himself before us as a public speaker, in which situation he stood eminently distinguished. A specimen of his judgment and perspicuity, accompanied with a nobleness of sentiment and sublimity of expression, are now before the public. Never did we see a man ascend the pulpit with a more serious air, conscious of the momentous work that he was engaged in. His discourses were extemporary, delivered in the strains of true unadulterated oratory. He had a great variety of talents, such as are seldom seen united in one person: his voice was melodious and affecting; his manner of delivery and action, were engaging, elegant, and easy, so as to captivate and fix the attention of every hearer. His explanations were distinct and clear; his arguments strong and forcible; and his exhortations warm and animating; his feelings were so intensely poignant, as to occasion, in some of his addresses, a flow of tears; which as it were by a sympathetical attraction, have drawn forth a reciprocal sensibility in his auditory. He despised those rhetorical tricks, that captivate and allure the multitude; and yet so numerous have been his assemblies, that the Churches, where he preached in the metropolis, could not contain the hearers. He had an extensive knowledge of the several avenues to the human mind, so as by a sublimity of reasoning to astonish his adversaries. He was no servile imitator of any one, a pleasing originality in his manner was peculiar to himself, and had the appearance of an immediate perception. For to discourse well, something more than learning is wanting; the happy art of expressing with facility and elegance, must, in a great degree, be born with the speaker, and



and is the immediate gift of heaven. A man may be unacquainted with the Grecian and Roman orators, or any perceptive treatise on the subject, and yet enter into the spirit of those great originals. Notwithstanding he was possessed of whatever study and application could impart, or learning, judgment, and genius, could combine, we find him estimating all human attainments, as of little consequence in divine things, without the effectual agency of the Holy Spirit. It was this that cast a lustre upon his abilities, and peculiarly characterized him a minister of the New Testament. He had the pleasure to see the work of the Lord prosper in his hands, and many souls given him, which will be his crown of rejoicing in the day of the appearance of the Lord Jesus.

Respecting the subject matter of his discourses he gives us the following unvarnished description, which shews that it was not his study to please men, at the expence of shunning to declare the *whole* counsel of God. He observes, to a person of high distinction : “ as to the doctrines of special and discriminating grace, I have thus much to observe : that, for the four first years after I was in orders, I dwelt chiefly on the general outlines of the gospel, in the usual course of my public ministry. I preached of little else, but of justification by faith only in the righteousness and atonement of Christ ; and of that personal holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. My reasons for thus narrowing the truths of God, were (with humiliation and repentance I desire to speak it), these two : 1. I thought these points were sufficient to convey as clear an idea, as was absolutely necessary, of salvation. And, 2. I was partly afraid to go any further.

God himself (for none but he could do it) gradually freed me from that fear. And as he never, at any time, permitted me to deliver, or even insinuate, any thing contradictory to his truths ; so has he  
been



been graciously pleased, for between seven and eight years past, to open my mouth to make known the entire mystery of his gospel, as far as his spirit has enlightened me into it.—The consequence of my first plan of operations was, that the generality of my hearers were pleased: but very few were converted.—The result of my latter deliverance from worldly wisdom and from worldly fear (so far as the Lord has exempted me from those snares), is, that multitudes have been very angry: but the conversions, which God has given me reason to hope he has wrought, have been, at least, three, for one before. Thus, I can testify, so far as I have been concerned, the usefulness of preaching predestination: or, in other words, of tracing salvation, and redemption, to their first source.”

The doctrine of predestination, though written as it were with a sun-beam in the volume of revelation, and which is to be found in the archives of every sound Protestant reformed church, is certainly offensive to the pride of the human heart. Hence we find, though our clergy solemnly and unequivocally aver before God, at their ordination, that it is a doctrine “*FULL of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort*,” yet, no sooner do they enter upon the sacred office, but the greater part of them do all in their power to depreciate, and to annul it altogether. Let us hear this preacher’s opinion why it ought not to be suppressed nor mutilated. Treating upon the publishing of this doctrine, he asks: “why should not this doctrine be preached and insisted upon in public, as a doctrine which is of express revelation; a doctrine that makes wholly for the glory of God; which conduces, in a most peculiar manner, to the conversion, comfort, and sanctification of the elect; and leaves even the ungodly without excuse.”

The doctrine of God’s eternal and unchangeable predestination should neither be wholly suppressed and laid aside; nor yet be confined to the disquisition



tion of the learned and speculative only ; but, likewise, should be publicly taught from the pulpit and the press ; that even the meanest of the people may not be ignorant of a truth, which reflects such glory on God, and is the very foundation of happiness to man. Let it, however, be preached with judgment and discretion : *i. e.* delivered by the preacher, as it is delivered in Scripture ; and no otherwise. By which means, it can neither be abused to licentiousness, nor misapprehended to despair : but will eminently conduce to the knowledge, establishment, improvement and comfort of them that hear. That predestination ought to be preached, I thus prove :

1. The gospel is to be preached : and that not partially, and by piecemeal, but the whole of it. The commission runs : Go forth and preach the gospel ; the gospel itself, even all the gospel, without exception or limitation, for, so far as the gospel is maimed, or any branch of the evangelical system is suppressed and passed over in silence, so far the gospel is not preached. Besides, there is scarce any other distinguishing doctrine of the gospel can be preached in its purity and consistency, without this of predestination. Election is the golden thread that runs through the whole Christian system ; it is the leaven, that pervades the whole lump. Cicero says of the various parts of human learning : “ *Omnes artes, quæ ad humanitatem pertinent, habent quoddam commune vinculum, et quasi cognatione quâdam inter se continentur : i. e.* The whole circle of arts have a kind of mutual bond and connection ; and, by a sort of reciprocal relationship, are held together, and interwoven with each other.” Much the same may be said of this important doctrine : it is the bond, which connects and keeps together the whole Christian system : which, without this, is like a system of sand, ever ready to fall to pieces. It is the cement, which holds the fabric together ; nay, it is the very soul that animates the whole frame. It is



so blended and interwoven with the entire scheme of gospel doctrine, that, when the former is excluded, the latter bleeds to death. An ambassador is to deliver the whole message with which he is charged. He is to omit no part of it; but must declare the mind of the sovereign he represents, fully and without reserve. He is to say neither more nor less, than the instructions of his court require. Else, he comes under displeasure; perhaps, loses his head. Let the ministers of Christ weigh this well.

These observations remind us of an observation of Baxter the great philosopher, in that invaluable Work of his, an Enquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul; wherein he says, "We should never dissemble any truth for fear of its consequences." Indeed, ingenuousness should ever be the inseparable companion of truth, especially in matters of serious and important concerns, he should ever be ennobled from all suspicion of hypocrisy, or double dealing.

In the year 1771, were published, three sermons, by Mr. Toplady, preached in his Church, at Broad-Hembury, Dec. 25, 1770, two of which were entitled, "Jesus seen of Angels," and the third, "God's Mindfulness of Man." In these elegant compositions, there is a novelty of sentiment in matters of the most common discussion: the beautiful pathos with which they abound, must at once excite the notice of the most cursory reader.

The publication of these discourses was succeeded by a pamphlet, entitled, "Free Thoughts on the projected Application to Parliament, in the Year 1771, for the Abolition of Ecclesiastical Subscription." Our author therein acknowledges himself a defender of subscriptions to articles of faith, and that a community has a right to demand it from those whom they invest with any office in religious concerns, as a fence for keeping principles inimical to their views from entering among them, at the same



same time he enters his protest, and looks upon it as a grievance, that it should be exacted from the laity, particularly, those,\* who take the academical degrees in law or physic, and asserts, that no body of men whatsoever have any plea to obtrude their opinions upon others. It was his uniform sentiments, that the empire of the mind, is peculiar to the dominion of God, in religious concerns; that, to exercise any authority over it, in any case, or in any degree whatever, is a sacrilegious invasion of the divine prerogative, and one of the highest offences that can be committed against God and man. He was a strenuous advocate for Christian benevolence, and for the unrestrained toleration of Protestant Dissenters, with an enlargement of mind, that has a tendency to unite good men of different persuasions into one bond of union, which is the great design of the gospel of Christ.

We find our author, in the year 1772, engaged again in vindicating the principles he patronised and avowed in his translation of Zanchius, in a publication under the title, "More Work for Mr. John Wesley, or a Vindication of the Decrees and Providences of God, against a Paper called the Consequence Proved." The decrees of God, or his imminent determination respecting either angels or men, are so inscrutable, that all human researches must utterly fail, when attempting an investigation. The bounds which should circumscribe our thoughts have been most indecently leapt over, so that in endeavouring to account for the divine procedure, and to reconcile what has been supposed to carry an incongruity of principle, have led the inquirers to canvas the indefeasible prerogative of Deity. The result of which has been, they have found themselves enveloped in a maze of contradiction, and instead of  
acknowledging

\* By an act 19 Geo. III. the Dissenters are tolerated to worship God, according to their consciences, on subscribing the Scriptures, instead of the articles.



acknowledging the ambiguity attending human reasoning on such topics; they have substituted frivolous and vexatious objections, contradicting the analogy of divine revelation. We read, that when Christ entered decisively upon the subject, in the 6th chapter of St. John's gospel, some of his disciples peremptorily asserted, that, "it was a hard saying," and asked, "Who could bear it?" Our Lord reiterated the doctrine to them, in the same discourse, and many of them, we are there informed, were so inveterate against him, that they left his presence, "and walked no more with him." As it was then, so has it been in every period of time. For almost every sect, however they may have disagreed upon other subjects, have unanimously coincided to explode, with a degrading menace, the doctrine of predestination. Persons of atheistical, and deistical principles, with those unacquainted with the Scriptures, have joined issue with one decisive adherency of opinion; not considering that the counsel of God must stand, and that he will do all his pleasure, his decrees being like himself immutable. Therefore to set in judgment on the divine purposes, is to bring them to a level with our own contracted views or abstract principles. The decrees of the Sovereign disposer of all events, are like those great luminaries which are so far distant from inspection, that they are not to be viewed with a microscopic eye. They diminish in their size, and recede from you when you attempt to examine them through artificial machines. Mr. Toplady, in this tract, canvasses the objections urged against God's prescience, with that acuteness of penetration, which carries a pleasing ingenuity in his explanations, cloathed with a vigour of language deserving commendation.

On the 12th of May, 1772, our author was appointed to preach a visitation sermon before the clergy of the archdeanery of Exeter, held at Colampton, which was published a few weeks after



under the title, "Clerical Subscription no Grievance, &c." This discourse is richly laden with evangelical treasure, we wish it were put into the hands of every candidate for the sacred ministry; on examination it will be found to contain a choice epitome of sacred truths, enforced to the conscience, by several apposite texts of Scripture, shewn to comport with the fixed principles of the Church of England.

Animated at all times with a laudable ardour for the interest of the established Church, he unremittingly endeavoured to retard its decay, and to restore it to its primitive principles, by bringing to appearance the excellent edifice of her doctrines, as erected on marble columns, instead of posts, crumbling to putrefaction. This is particularly exemplified by referring to a work of his in two vol. octavo, published in the year 1774, inscribed "Historic Proof of the Doctrinal Calvinism of the Church of England, &c." In these volumes, he has shewn great classical taste, splendour of erudition and critical acumen, for while he is attending to the merit of others, he is raising a monument of his own abilities. In this history he investigates the principles of many of those great worthies who were the agents, under Divine Providence, of bringing in the dawn of the morning, into the dark abodes of barbarism and ignorance. The light they were the means of diffusing has gradually increased, and continued as it proceeded in the midst of intervening clouds, until we in our day have experienced something descriptive of its meridian brightness. To that keenness of understanding so necessary to form a true critic, he hath added that perseverance of investigation, and accuracy of research, which were essential in delineating the portraits of those great characters. In the details of the extracts and examination of their principles, he gives an immediate transcript of the feelings of his own mind, and indisputably proves the Calvinism of the Church he was



so zealously espoused to. Indeed so convinced was he of the Calvinism of the Church of England, of which he was a minister, that we find him after the publication of his *Historic Proof*, expressing himself as follows: — “though I have for fifteen years, that is very near half my life, been solidly and clearly convinced, of the original and intrinsic Calvinism of the Established Church; still, I did not know, that the subject was supported by such a vast confluence of positive authorities, until the furious opposition of the Methodists forced me to take a nearer and more exact view of the argument. Thus far, at least I am obliged to that virulent sect. And on a retrospective view of the whole matter, I myself stand astonished at that profusion of evidence, which pours from every quarter, in favour of the main point. My own collections to go no farther, viewed in the aggregate, absolutely surprise me. And yet the testimonies are far from being exhausted.”

In the year 1774, were published by Mr. Toplady, two Sermons, one preached at St. Ann's, Blackfriars, May 25th, with the inscription, “Free Will and Merit fairly examined, or Men not their own Saviours.” The other was preached at the Lock Chapel, June 19, entitled, “Good News from Heaven, or the Gospel a joyful Sound,” both delivered in the above year. These two discourses are a desirable acquisition to the lovers of evangelical religion, and sound reasoning. The material principles contended for, are comprised in narrow limits, their connection and existence are made to appear to depend on one another. The arguments are well distinguished and arranged. The clearness and precision of the definitions are such, that every thing extraneous is thrown up, and nothing redundant retained, which is not directly adherent to the points immediately in view. The topics introduced, are prosecuted with great judgment, accuracy, and caution, so as to steer clear of Arminianism on one side, and Libertinism on the other.

In



In the beginning of the year 1774, a religious pamphlet was printed, called the Gospel Magazine ; being a new series of a former work under that name, which was continued statedly. The utility of such a periodical publication must be obvious, for the contents, when executed with discernment, will be various, interesting, instructive, and entertaining, and may be easily purchased by those who have scarcely means to procure a number of books. The above journal was carried on with reputable distinction for a few years. From December 1775, to June 1776, Mr. Toplady was the editor, which enhanced the sale considerably ; some of the anonymous parts he composed therein, shine conspicuous. He often appeared under the modest character of *Minimus*. Sometimes he adopted the descriptive signature of *Concionator*, and a few papers with the initials of his own name. With the assistance of ingenious and learned correspondents, he continued for a time to enrich and diversify this monthly entertainment for the public.

In the year 1775, Mr. Toplady published an 8vo. vol. entitled, “The Scheme of Christian and Philosophical Necessity asserted.” In this work, he appears not only as a respectable divine, but as a philosopher and a man of taste ; he adopts the opinion in behalf of physical and moral necessity, and rescues the doctrine from the pretended charge of irrationality, brought against it by the self taught opinionist ; he combats the notion of man’s determining power, and analyses the two component principles with much ingenuity, and with a palatable mixture of science and pleasantry. He vindicates God’s preterition of some of the fallen race, as a Scripture doctrine, at the same time gives his opinion from circumstances, that the far greater part of the human race, are made for endless happiness. To this tract is subjoined a dissertation concerning the sensible qualities of colour illustrated from the celebrated Mr. Locke. Our author in his reasonings,



reasonings, by a natural and easy turn, carries persuasion into the heart of the reader without fatiguing him, and though there may not be always an agreement with the peruser and writer in metaphysical or philosophical matters, he must be a very nice critic who is not much taken with many parts of it, as an uniformity of opinion on some speculative subjects is almost impossible.

It may be remembered, that during the war between Great Britain and a large part of the inhabited globe in America, that the feuds and dissensions of party were carried to a considerable extent, discussions began to take place on subjects, which before were held too sacred to be entered upon. It was well known that Mr. Toplady was against those coercive measures that had taken place, and was of opinion, that no plea could be set up in justification of the proceedings of this country against the colonies, which could be defended on constitutional principles. He was so explicit as to confess, that the civil rights of mankind, rank next in value, dignity, and importance, to the gospel of Christ. That the good Christian, and the good Englishman are characters perfectly compatible, and that no book is more unfavourable to the claims of arbitrary power than the Bible. His sentiments were, that if ever English liberty perish, its perdition must be owing to want of spirit and of virtue in the English. While they as a people are wise to understand, virtuous to love, and firm to defend the palladium of their own constitution, no weapon formed against it can ultimately prosper. England must be a *felo de se* and fall by political suicide; that is, she must tamely resign her throat to the knife of despotism before it be possible for her constitutional existence to fail, and that no such degenerate miscreants may ever arise to dishonour the name and betray the rights of Britain, were his fervent wishes on many public and private occasions. As an enemy to passive obedience, and unlimited subjection to civil government, he was



exposed to the malicious insinuations of those, who had an ingenuity in misrepresenting his motives, and traducing his character as a Republican in principle; indeed, so ridiculously prejudiced were some of his friends, that it occasioned a suspension of that mutual endearment that apparently subsisted between them in the paths of common amities. It happened very seasonably, that an occasion presented for him to remove the obloquy that had been thrown on his character, by his being appointed to preach at St. Mildred's Church, in the Poultry, on Friday, Dec. 13, 1776; being a day which was set apart for a general fast. His text was from Phil. iv. 5. The sermon was printed the beginning of the ensuing year. In this discourse, he unequivocally delivered his political sentiments, suitable to the clerical character, expressing a sincere attachment for the English constitution, and to legal liberty, with that subjection to a mild and equitable authority; which was the result of his good sense, prudence, and moderation.

It was the infelicity of our much loved friend to have a capacious soaring mind, inclosed in a very weak and languid body; yet, this by no means retarded his intense application to study, which was often prolonged until two and three o'clock in the morning; this and the cold moist air that generally prevails in Devonshire, which is extremely pernicious to weak lungs, is more than probable laid the foundation of a consumption, which terminated in his death. He endeavoured to exchange his living for one in a southern part of the island, but could not obtain it. As his strength and health were greatly impaired, he was advised by the faculty to remove to London, which he accordingly did in the year 1775, and notwithstanding his debilitated frame, he continued to preach a number of sermons in the churches, for the benefit of public charitable institutions.

Having no settled situation in the metropolis to preach in, and many of his friends being desirous of receiving the advantages of his ministry, they procured



cured by an engagement with the trustees of the French Calvinist reformed Church, in Orange-street, Leicester-Fields, their chapel for divine service, on Sunday and Wednesday evenings. Mr. Toplady accordingly preached his first lecture there on Sunday, April 11, 1776, from the 44th of Isaiah, verse the 22d. It was on that spot where he closed his ministerial labours, which continued there for the term of two years and three months. In his addresses from the pulpit in that chapel, he appeared often, as it were, divested of the body, and to be in the participation of the happiness that appertain to the invisible state. It was not the mechanical process of preaching, regulated by the caprice of the moment; what he delivered he felt, and his feelings proceeded from thoughtfulness, meditation, and experience; an experience illuminated by divine knowledge, which continued copiously increasing, the nearer he approached his heavenly inheritance.

During the time of his residence at Orange-street Chapel, he published in the year 1776, a collection of Psalms and Hymns, for public and private worship. The compositions are four hundred and nineteen in number; they are judiciously selected, and some of them altered, where the phraseology is exceptionable. The whole tenor of them are truly evangelical. In an excellent and sensible preface, prefixed to this manual of sacred poetry, Mr. Toplady observes, that, "with regard to the collection, he could only say, that (excepting the very few hymns of his own, which he was prevailed with to insert), it ought to be the best that has appeared, considering the great number of volumes (no fewer than between forty and fifty), which had, more or less, contributed to the compilation." A spurious edition has been printed, but so retrenched and augmented, as to leave no resemblance to the valuable original, which is replete with the richest odours of gospel truth.

The apprehensions entertained, for some time past,



past, by those who loved him, that his health on the decline, began now to be confirmed. For, on Easter Sunday, the 19th April, 1778, as he attempted to speak, from Isaiah xxvi. v. 19, "Thy dead men shall live together, with my dead body shall they arise, &c." his hoarseness was so violent, that he was obliged, after naming the text, to descend from the pulpit, but so ardently abounding was he in the ministry of the word, that when the least abatement in his disorder gave him a little strength, he entered upon his delightful work with that alacrity of spirit, as if he was in a state of convalescence: when done preaching, he has been so enfeebled, as to create the most exquisite sensibility in the breasts of those who have beheld him. After the above Sunday, he preached four times, and on each occasion, his words were to the congregation, as if he should never see them more, until he met them in the kingdom of heaven.

While this great and invaluable Christian was waiting, and earnestly desiring a dismissal from the body, and having, as himself expressed, settled all his concerns, respecting both worlds, so as to have nothing to do but die, he received a shaft from a quiver unexpected. Mr. Wesley, and some of his followers, had propagated, that Mr. Toplady had receded from his former principles, and had a desire to protest against them, in the presence of Mr. Wesley. Letters from the country were sent to him, mentioning his recantation, as also some verbal intimations from those who were present, when the intelligence was given. The suggestion of such a report was certainly prematurely made on the presumption that Mr. Toplady was in such a state, that it would not be communicated to him, and if it should, that his tongue and pen would be so torpid, as to render him unable to enter his protest against the flagitious turpitude of such a procedure. When the above transactions were rehearsed to him, it rekindled the dying embers that remained. He acquainted his physician with his intentions of going



going before his congregation again, and to make a solemn appeal in reference to his past and present principles ; so as to counteract the baneful effects of party rage, and misrepresentation, concealed under the robe of virtue, or Christian purity. He was informed, that it would be dangerous in him to make the attempt ; and, that probably he might die in the execution of it. He replied, with his usual magnanimity, “ A good man once said, he would rather wear out, than rust out ; and I would rather die in the harness, than die in the stall.” On Sunday, June the 14th, he came from Knightsbridge, and, after a sermon, by his assistant, the Rev. Dr. Illingworth, he went into the pulpit, to the inexpressible surprise of his people, and made a short, but affecting exhortation, from the 2d Epistle of Peter, chap. i, ver. 13. 14 : “ Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance, knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.” When mentioning the sensible peace he was a recipient of, and the joy and consolation of the Holy Spirit, that he participated of for several months past, and the desirable expectation, that in a few days he must resign his mortal part to corruption, as a prelude to his seeing the king in his beauty : the effect this had upon his auditory cannot be described or anticipated ; but must be seen and felt, to be justly related. He closed his address, respecting the purport of his coming there, in substance as follows, which was printed in a week after, entitled, “ The Rev. Mr. Toplady’s Dying Avowal of his Religious Sentiments.”

Whereas, some time since, a wicked, scandalous and false report was diffused, in various parts of this kingdom, by the followers of Mr. John Wesley ; purporting, that I have changed some of my religious sentiments, especially such of them as relate more immediately to the doctrines of Grace, I thought it my indispensable duty, on the Sunday after I received



ceived this information, which was the 13th of June last, publicly to declare myself, from the pulpit in Orange-street Chapel, to the following effect: "It having been industriously circulated, by some malicious and unprincipled persons, that, during my present long and severe illness, I expressed a strong desire of seeing Mr. John Wesley before I die, and revoking some particulars relative to him, which occur in my writings: Now, I do publicly and most solemnly aver, that I have not, nor ever had, any such intention or desire; and that I most sincerely hope, my last hours will be much better employed, than in conversing with such a man." To which I added: "So certain and so satisfied am I, of the truth of all that I have ever written; that, was I now sitting up in my dying bed, with a pen and ink in my hand, and all the religious and controversial writings I ever published (more especially those relating to Mr. John Wesley, and the Arminian controversy), whether respecting facts or doctrines, could at once be displayed to my view, I should not strike out a single line relative to him or them."

Matters rested thus, when I received a letter, dated July 17, 1778, from a friend who lives near an hundred miles from town, in which letter is the following passage: "I cannot help feeling an uncommon emotion and surprise, at the report, that you have recanted all that you have written and said against John Wesley, and many like things; and that you declared as much, to your congregation, a few weeks ago. I was told this, by two persons, who said, they were there present at the time. How am I amazed, at such falsehoods! The party, and name, and character, that are established by lies, have no good foundation, and therefore can never stand long."

This determined me to publish the present address to the religious world. I pray God to give the perfect liars, grace and repentance to the acknowledgement of the truth. And may every blessing, of the upper, and of the nether springs, be the portion of those



those who maintain, who experience, and adorn, the glorious gospel of the grace of God.

Should any hostile notice be taken of this paper, I do not intend to make any kind of reply. I am every day in view of dissolution. And, in the fullest assurance of my eternal salvation (an assurance which has not been clouded by a single doubt, for near a year and a half last past) am waiting, looking, and longing for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I once intended subjoining to this paper, the specific outlines of my religious sentiments; but on farther reflection, I believe it may be more expedient to refer the reader to the several writings\* I have published: every one of which I do hereby, as a dying man, ratify and declare to be expressive of my real religious principles, from any one of which principles I have never varied, in the least degree, since God enlightened me into the clear knowledge of his truth; which is now within a few weeks, of twenty years ago.

I was awakened in the month of August, 1755, but not, as has been falsely reported, under Mr. John Wesley, or any preacher connected with him.

Though awakened in 1755, I was not led into a full and clear view of all the doctrines of grace, till the year 1758, when, through the great goodness of God, my Arminian prejudices received an effectual shock, in reading Dr. Manton's Sermons on the xviith of St. John.

I shall remember the years 1755, and 1758, with gratitude and joy, in the heaven of heavens, to all eternity.

*Augustus Montague Toplady.*

Knightsbridge,  
July 22, 1778.

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\* If the reader wishes to see a doctrinal compendium of these, he will find it, in a sermon of mine, entitled, "A Caveat against unsound Doctrines:" every part of which I hereby avow to be declarative of my fixed and ultimate judgment.



We have followed this ambassador of Christ in his public character, and have now to behold him in the closing scene of life immoveable and unappalled. The doctrine of the gospel which he so sweetly accented, and was his constant theme in the house of his pilgrimage, proved his support and comfort, when his fabric was gradually falling to dissolution. His divine Master was pleased to confer a peculiar honour upon him in his last hours, by sustaining him in that trying conflict, and by giving him a view by faith, of the glory that awaited him. The Psalmist's words were verified in him, That light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. How does the lustre of what men call great, and the splendid actions by which they are dazzled, appear to fade, and prove to be as illusive shadows, when we view a believer in his dying moments, felicitated in the bright and unclouded prospect of eternal felicity!

We shall here introduce a few extracts from a small narrative, published a short time after his death. Some of his observations and remarks were, by a few persons, who were present, committed to writing, that they should not be effaced from the memory, and for the satisfaction of others.

In conversation with a gentleman of the faculty, not long before his death, he frequently disclaimed with abhorrence, the least dependence on his own righteousness, as any cause of his justification before God, and said, that he rejoiced only in the free, complete, and everlasting salvation of God's elect by Jesus Christ, through the sanctification of the Holy Spirit. We cannot satisfy the reader more than by giving this friend's own relation of intercourse and conversation. "A remarkable jealousy was apparent in his whole conduct, for fear of receiving any part of that honour, which is due to Christ alone. He desired to be nothing, and that Jesus might be all, and in all.—His feelings were so very tender upon this subject, that I once undesignedly put him almost in an agony,  
by



by remarking the great loss, which the Church of Christ would sustain by his death, at this particular juncture.—The utmost distress was immediately visible in his countenance, and he exclaimed to this purpose; What; by my death? No! by my death? No.—Jesus Christ is able, and will, by proper instruments, defend his own truths.—And with regard to what little I have been enabled to do in this way; not to me, not to me, but to his own name, and to that only, be the glory.

“ Conversing upon the subject of election, he said; That God’s everlasting love to his chosen people; his eternal, particular, most free, and immutable choice of them in Christ Jesus; was without the least respect to any work, or works, of righteousness, wrought, or to be wrought, or that ever should be wrought, in them or by them: for God’s election does not depend upon our sanctification, but our sanctification depends upon God’s election and appointment of us to everlasting life.—At another time he was so affected with a sense of God’s everlasting love to his soul, that he could not refrain from bursting into tears.

“ The more his bodily strength was impaired, the more vigorous, lively, and rejoicing, his mind seemed to be. From the whole tenor of his conversation during our interviews, he appeared not merely placid and serene, but he evidently possessed the fullest assurance of the most triumphant faith. He repeatedly told me, that he had not had the least shadow of a doubt, respecting his eternal salvation, for near two years past. It is no wonder, therefore, that he so earnestly longed to be dissolved and to be with Christ. His soul seemed to be constantly panting heavenward; and his desires increased, the nearer his dissolution approached.—A short time before his death, at his request, I felt his pulse: and he desired to know, what I thought of it. I told him, that his heart and arteries evidently beat (almost every day) weaker and weaker. He replied immediately with the  
the



the sweetest smile upon his countenance, Why, that is a good sign, that my death is fast approaching; and blessed be God, I can add, that my heart beats every day stronger and stronger for glory.

“A few days preceding his dissolution, I found him sitting up in his arm-chair, and scarce able to move or speak. I addressed him very softly, and asked, if his consolations continued to abound, as they had hitherto done. He quickly replied; Oh, my dear Sir, it is impossible to describe how good God is to me. Since I have been sitting in this chair this afternoon (glory be to his name!) I have enjoyed such a season, such sweet communion with God, and such delightful manifestations of his presence with, and love to my soul, that it is impossible for words, or any language, to express them. I have had peace and joy unutterable; and I fear not, but that God's consolations and support will continue.—But he immediately recollected himself, and added, What have I said? God may, to be sure, as a sovereign, hide his face and his smiles from me; however, I believe he will not; and if he should, yet still will I trust in him: I know I am safe and secure; for his love and his covenant are everlasting.”

To another friend, who, in a conversation with him upon the subject of his principles, had asked him, whether any doubt remained upon his mind respecting the truth of them? he answered; Doubt, Sir, doubt! Pray use not that word, when speaking of me. I cannot endure the term; at least, while God continues to shine upon my soul, in the gracious manner he does now: not (added he) but that I am sensible, that while, in the body, if left of him, I am capable, through the power of temptation, of calling into question every truth of the gospel. But, that is so far from being the case, that the comforts and manifestations of his love are so abundant, as to render my state and condition the most desirable in the world. I would not exchange my condition with any one upon earth. And, with respect to my principles;



principles ; those blessed truths, which I have been enabled in my poor measure to maintain, appear to me, more than ever, most gloriously indubitable. My own existence is not, to my apprehension, a greater certainty.

The same friend calling upon him a day or two before his death, he said, with hands clasped, and his eyes lifted up and starting with tears of the most evident joy, Oh, my dear Sir, I cannot tell you the comforts I feel in my soul : they are past expression. The consolations of God to such an unworthy wretch are so abundant, that he leaves me nothing to pray for, but a continuance of them. I enjoy a heaven already in my soul. My prayers are all converted into praise. Nevertheless, I do not forget, that I am still in the body, and liable to all those distressing fears, which are incident to human nature, when under temptation and without any sensible divine support. But so long as the presence of God continues with me in the degree I now enjoy it, I cannot but think that such a desponding frame is impossible. All this he spake with an emphasis, the most ardent that can be conceived.

Speaking to another particular friend upon the subject of his “ dying avowal,” he expressed himself thus: My dear friend, those great and glorious truths, which the Lord, in rich mercy, has given me to believe, and which he has enabled me (though very feebly) to stand forth in the defence of, are not (as those, who believe not, or oppose them, say) dry doctrines, or mere speculative points. No. But, being brought into practical and heart-felt experience, they are the very joy and support of my soul ; and the consolations flowing from them, carry me far above the things of time and sense. Soon afterwards, he added : So far as I know my own heart, I have no desire, but to be entirely passive ; to live, to die, to be, to do, to suffer, whatever is God’s blessed will concerning me ; being perfectly satisfied, that, as he ever has, so he ever will do that



which is best concerning me; and that he deals out, in number, weight, and measure, whatever will conduce most to his own glory, and to the good of his people.

Another of his friends, mentioning likewise the report that was spread abroad of his recanting his former principles; he said, with some vehemence and emotion, I recant my former principles! God forbid, that I should be so vile an apostate! To which he presently added, with great apparent humility, And yet that apostate I should soon be, if I were left to myself.

To the same friend, conversing upon the subject of his sickness, he said: Sickness is no affliction; pain no curse; death itself no dissolution.

All his conversations, as he approached nearer and nearer to his decease, seemed more and more happy and heavenly. He frequently called himself the happiest man in the world. Oh! (says he) how this soul of mine longs to be gone! Like a bird imprisoned in a cage, it longs to take its flight. Oh, that I had wings like a dove, then would I flee away to the realms of bliss, and be at rest for ever! Oh, that some guardian angel might be commissioned; for I long to be absent from this body, and to be with my Lord for ever. Being asked by a friend, if he always enjoyed such manifestations, he answered, I cannot say there are no intermissions; for, if there were not, my consolations would be more and greater than I could possibly bear; but, when they abate, they leave such an abiding sense of God's goodness, and of the certainty of my being fixed upon the eternal rock Christ Jesus, that my soul is still filled with peace and joy.

At another time, and indeed for many days together, he cried out, Oh, what a day of sunshine has this been to me! I have not words to express it. It is unutterable. Oh, my friends, how good is God! almost without interruption, his presence has been with me. And then, repeating several passages  
of



of Scripture, he added, What a great thing it is to rejoice in death! Speaking of Christ, he said, his love is unutterable! He was happy in declaring, that the 8th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, from the 33d to the end of the six following verses, were the joy and comfort of his soul. Upon that portion of Scripture, he often descanted with great delight, and would be frequently ejaculating, Lord Jesus! why tarriest thou so long! He sometimes said, I find as the bottles of heaven empty, they are filled again; meaning, probably, the continual comforts of grace, which he abundantly enjoyed.

When he drew near his end, he said, waking from a slumber; Oh, what delights! Who can fathom the joys of the third heaven? And, a little before his departure, he was blessing and praising God for continuing to him, his understanding in clearness; but (added he, in a rapture) for what is most of all, his abiding presence, and the shining of his love upon my soul. The sky (says he) is clear; there is no cloud: Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!

Within the hour of his death, he called his friends and his servant, and asked them, if they could give him up: upon their answering in the affirmative, since it pleased the Lord to be so gracious to him, he replied; Oh, what a blessing it is, you are made willing to give me up into the hands of my dear Redeemer, and to part with me: it will not be long before God takes me; for no mortal man can live, (bursting, while he said it, into tears of joy) after the glories, which God has manifested to my soul. Soon after this, he closed his eyes, and found (as Milton finely expresses it)

————— A death-like sleep,  
A gentle wafting to immortal life,

on Tuesday August the 11th, 1778, in the 38th year of his age.

While rehearsing these particulars, we cannot help laying down the pen to drop a tributary tear to the revered memory of this highly respectable minister  
of



of Jesus Christ. — Yet a little time and all painful recollection and sensations of this kind will be at an end, we shall have no more occasion to mark the vicissitudes of human affairs, nor to reflect on the nature and mixture of all earthly enjoyments, the transient duration of mortality shall never more be experienced, for the lustre of all that is great and lovely in the human character, will be absorbed in the presence and in the perfect fruition of the adorable Trinity.

On Monday, August the 17th, 1778, at four o'clock in the afternoon, his remains were brought from Knightsbridge, to Tottenham Court Chapel, to be interred. Though the time was kept as private as possible, there was notwithstanding several thousands of persons present on the solemnity. It was his particular request that no funeral sermon should be preached; he desired to slip into the tomb unnoticed and unregarded. His soul disdained to borrow posthumous fame. He had no wish to have his memory perpetuated by those little arts and finesses so often practised; he knew that his record was on high, and that his name was written in the Lamb's Book of Life. He sought for no eulogium while living, and any panegyricks bestowed upon him when his course was run, he knew could be of no service, and which is often too justly construed to proceed from pride, vanity, and weakness.

The Rev. Mr. Rowland Hill, prior to the burial service, could not refrain from innocently trespassing upon the solicitation of his departed friend, by addressing the multitude on the solemn occasion, and embraced the opportunity of affectionately declaring the love and veneration he felt for the deceased. The beautiful simplicity of his pathos, and the incomparable exquisite sensibility he shewed, was more than equivalent to the most studied harangue, furnished with all the trappings of meretricious ornaments. The funeral obsequies were read by Dr. Illingworth, and concluded with a suitable hymn. The casket  
which



which held this intrinsic jewel, now lies intombed in the family grave of Mr. Hussey, thirteen feet deep, under the gallery opposite the pulpit in the above chapel, whereon is fixed a plain stone, with only his name and age inscribed. His clay tenement rests there until the morning of the resurrection, when the trump of God, and the voice of the archangel, shall call forth his sleeping dust to join the disembodied spirit, now in the realms of bliss and glory.

The precious remains of this good man had not been long in the earth, when Mr. Wesley publicly asserted that he died blaspheming, and in the horror of despair; such unparalleled virulence of conduct, undoubtedly exposed the personal enmity that rankled in Mr. Wesley's breast towards Mr. Toplady. Men have a natural propensity to divide in opinion; an aberration from the purest system, may attend the path of the most cautious traveller, and no impeachment whatever, may be charged upon his benignity or integrity; but when materials, or facts of an important tendency, are accessible, and these are reversed or distorted by an interested falsehood, a display of a conduct so mischievous in its consequence, must lose all pretensions to veracity, and be too obvious to need any comment.

Sir Richard Hill,\* a character of eminence, who has for many years appeared as a disinterested volunteer in behalf of evangelical religion, and whose excellent

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\* We have here to notice in this third impression of the life of Mr. Toplady, the death of this worthy baronet, which took place the 28th of November, 1808, in the 76th year of his age, and exactly thirty years after the death of his friend.

From a love he bore to his divine master, he entered a partizan in the polemic field of warfare. He was put on a post of importance, whereon he proved himself a brave, experienced and skilful veteran. He was an illustrious example of fortitude and perseverance in the cause of Christ, and pursued in a career of unblemished reputation to the last, holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience.



cellent virtues have at the same time adorned his Christian profession, stood forward, unsolicited, and detected the malignant conduct of Mr. Wesley, on this occasion, in an anonymous letter in a morning paper, and in a few weeks after he addressed him again in a small pamphlet, signed with his own name, and acknowledged himself the writer of the former. As these particulars are of material consequence in this narration, we shall not make any circuitous apology for inserting them here verbatim, with only this observation, that Mr. Wesley made no reply in any way.

*Copy of a Letter addressed to the Rev. John Wesley, which appeared in the General Advertiser on the eighth Day of October last.*

Rev. Sir,

I give you this public notice, that certain persons who are your enemies, perhaps only because you keep clear of their calvinistic doctrines, have thought proper to affirm, that you and some of your preachers, have been vilifying the ashes, and traducing the memory of the late Mr. Augustus Toplady. Nay, it was even positively alledged, that you told Mr. Thomas Robinson of Hilderthorpe, near Bridlington in Yorkshire, and the Rev. Mr. Greaves, curate to Mr. Fletcher of Madeley, that the account published concerning Mr. Toplady's death, was a gross imposition on the public; for that he died in black despair, uttering the most horrible blasphemies; and that none of his friends were permitted to see him. All which was repeated at Bridlington, by one of your preachers, whose name is Rhodes, who further compared Mr. Toplady's case, to the awful one of Francis Spira: and added, "that the dreadful manner in which he died, had caused



caused a woman who attended him to join your societies."

Now, Sir, as many living respectable witnesses can testify that Mr. Toplady departed this life in the full triumph of faith, and that the account published to the world of the state of soul he was in during his long illness, and at the hour of dissolution, was strictly and literally a true one, you are earnestly requested, for the satisfaction of your friends, thus publicly to assure the world, that you never advanced any thing of this sort to Mr. Robinson, Mr. Greaves, or to any other person; or else that you will produce your authority for your assertions; otherwise, it is to be feared, that your own character will suffer much, for having vented a most gross malicious falsehood against a dead man who cannot answer for himself, in order to support your own cause and party.

I am, Rev. Sir,

Your sincere well-wisher,

VERITAS.

*Letter to the Rev. John Wesley, Hawkstone, Nov.  
29, 1779.*

Rev. Sir,

The cause of my thus publicly addressing you, is owing to an information I received that you wished to know who was the author of a letter, which appeared in the General Advertiser, on Friday the 8th of October last, wherein were some queries put to you concerning certain reports which it was supposed you had spread, relative to the illness and death of the late Mr. Augustus Toplady. I was further given to understand, that you had declared your intention of answering that letter, if the writer would annex his name to it. This being the case, though names cannot at all alter facts, yet as I really



wish to be rightly informed myself, and as the reports which have been propagated about Mr. Toplady have much staggered and grieved many serious Christians, I now (under my real signature) beg with all plainness, and with no other design than that the real truth may be known, again to propound those questions to you which were put in that letter, of which I confess myself to have been the sole author. And as I hear you have been pleased to call the letter a scurrilous one, I should be glad if you would point out to me wherein that scurrility consists; for though it were anonymous, I am not in the least conscious that there was any thing in it unbecoming that respect which might be due to a gentleman of your venerable age and function; and when you have shewn me wherein I have been culpable, I shall then readily and submissively ask your pardon. The letter itself I shall annex to this. The queries contained in it may be reduced to the following.

1st. Did you, Sir, or did you not tell Mr. Thomas Robinson, of Hilderthorpe, near Bridlington in Yorkshire, that Mr. Toplady died in black despair, blaspheming; and that a greater imposition never was imposed on the public than that published by his friends relative to his death?

2dly. Did you ever tell the same in substance to the Rev. Mr. Greaves\*, curate to Mr. Fletcher of Madely, or to any other person?

3dly. Did you, or did you not say, that none of Mr. Toplady's friends were permitted to see him during his illness?

I now beg leave to tell you, that the cause of my offering these queries to you was owing to the following letter, which I received just before, from a kind friend,

\* I hope this worthy gentleman, for whom I profess a sincere esteem, will pardon my having introduced his name without asking his permission.



friend, and worthy minister of the gospel at Burlington (or Bridlington) in Yorkshire.

“ Honoured and dear Friend,

“ Grace, mercy and peace be multiplied unto you from the Father, and from Jesus Christ, by the blessed Spirit. On the 21st day of August, 1779, I received from Mr. Thomas Robinson, of Hilderthorp, the following awful, and no less shocking account respecting the death of Mr. Toplady. He said, Mr. J. Wesley told him, that Mr. Toplady died in black despair, blaspheming; and that a greater imposition was never imposed on the public, than that published by his friends relative to his death. He added also, that none of his friends were permitted to see him in his illness: and that one of Mr. John Wesley’s preachers, whose name is Rhodes, did on the 20th instant, declare, that Mr. Toplady’s case was equal to that of Francis Spira; and that the servant who waited upon him did, after his death, join Mr. Wesley’s societies, signifying that there was something very awful.\* Now, dear Sir, as I know nobody more capable of giving me some satisfaction respecting this heart-affecting report than what you are, please to excuse the liberty I have taken in troubling you; wishing and beseeching you, to give me, if you can, a true account of this gloomy story, and you will very much oblige one who wishes you the peaceable enjoyment of every temporal and spiritual good. Believing, nevertheless, that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. The redeemed of  
the

\* I cannot believe so ill of Mr. Rhodes, as to suppose he himself invented this horrid tale. He best knows whence he had it. But Mr. Wesley and he being at Burlington about the same time, there is reason to suppose he received it from the same quarter Mr. T. Robinson did.



the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Sion, &c.

“ Dear Sir, believe me to be  
your sincere, affectionate friend,  
and humble servant, in the gospel of  
Christ Jesus our Lord,  
J. GAWKRODGER.”

*Bridlington, August 30, 1779.*

Methinks, Sir, this letter breathes the language of real Christianity, and of a heart deeply concerned and interested in the welfare of one from whose works I know that Mr. G. had received the highest delight and satisfaction. He had read the account of Mr. Toplady's illness and death; he rejoiced to see the doctrines of the gospel confirmed and established in the experience of that eminent servant of Jesus Christ; and his own heart found strong consolation whilst he meditated on the triumphant victory, which his late brother in the ministry had obtained over the king of terrors, through faith in our glorious Immanuel.

Amidst these views and meditations, he is told, by a pious friend and neighbour of his, that Mr. John Wesley had assured him, “ that Mr. Toplady died blaspheming, in black despair; that none of his friends were permitted to see him in his illness; and that the account of his death, published by his friends, was a gross imposition on the public: and that a preacher of Mr. Wesley's had moreover asserted the same, with this further circumstance, that the person who attended Mr. Toplady in his illness, struck with horror at his awful departure, had joined the Methodists.”

Overwhelmed with grief and amazement at this declaration, and the authority produced in defence of it (an authority which he dares not call in question), he writes to me to be further informed of the matter. Upon the receipt of this letter, I thought  
it



it best to go to the fountain head, in order to investigate the truth, and therefore called upon you in the public papers, to know whether you did, or did not, assert the things which are charged upon you. If you did not assert them, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Greaves, and several other persons, have treated you in a manner the most injurious, by making use of the sanction of your name for the propagation of a most wicked and malicious lie. If you did assert them, either you had, or had not authority for his assertions; if you had no authority, then you, yourself must have been the inventor of them. If you had authority, then you must know whence that authority came. In order, therefore, to exculpate your own character before the world, be pleased now to name that authority. Tell us how you became so well acquainted with what passed in Mr. Toplady's sick chamber, and on his dying-bed, when even his most dear and intimate friends were not permitted to see him? Did his nurse, Mrs. Sterling, who attended him, and was with him when he died, communicate this intelligence? I hear she has called upon you on purpose to vindicate herself from the charge of any such assertion; and is ready to declare to all the world, that throughout Mr. Toplady's long illness, to the hour of his dissolution, prayer and praise, joy and triumph in the God of his salvation, were the continual employments of his lips and heart. But as your conduct will probably make one of the many friends who were permitted to see Mr. Toplady in his illness, think it necessary to give the public some further particulars, relative to the state of his soul in that trying season; I shall only, in this place, present you with a short abstract from a letter which I received from a worthy clergyman, a friend of Mr. Toplady's, soon after his departure; his words are as follow:

“ You will be pleased with the two following remarks made by Mr. Toplady, not long before his death:



death: "To a person interested in the salvation of Christ, sickness is no disease, pain no affliction, death no dissolution." The other was an answer to Doctor Gifford, in consequence of the Doctor's expressing hopes that Mr. Toplady might recover, and be again useful. Mr. Toplady heard what his friend had to say, and then expressed himself nearly in the following words: "I believe God never gave such manifestations of his love to any creature, and suffered him to live."—Thus far my friend.

We can now look to no other source from whence these reports may have flowed, than to the most deliberate malice of Mr. Toplady's avowed foes, among whom, notwithstanding your continual preaching about "love, love; peace, peace, my brethren," I fear you are chief. Till therefore you produce your authority for what you told Mr. Thomas Robinson and others, I have full right, nay, I am absolutely necessitated to fix upon you, Rev. Sir, as the raiser, and fabricator of this most nefarious report; which I cannot look upon merely as a common falsity, but as a malicious attempt to invalidate and set aside the testimony which God, the eternal Spirit himself, was pleased to bear to his own truth, and to his own work, upon the heart of a dying believer; and even to turn that testimony into the blasphemies of Satan. And in this view of it, how far short it falls of the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, must be left to your awful consideration.

When one Jane Cowper, a person belonging to your societies, died, you were ready enough to give your imprimatur and recommendation to every wild flight of fancy she uttered, as "all strong sterling sense, strictly agreeable to sound reason." "Here, (says Mr. Wesley in his preface), are no extravagant flights, no mystic reveries, no unscriptural enthusiasm. The sentiments are all just and noble."—The cause is plain. The Lord (it seems) had promised this Jane Cowper, "that Mr. J. Wesley's latter



ter works should exceed his former," therefore she must be canonized ; \* but Mr. Toplady, in his dying avowal, had borne his open testimony both against Mr. Wesley and his principles, therefore, " the devil himself could not have invented any thing worse than what he had uttered," and he must be sent blaspheming and despairing into the bottomless pit. Behold ! Sir, what self-partiality and a desire to make known your own importance leads you to. The like spirit runs throughout all your publications, whether sermons, journals, appeals, preservatives, Arminian magazines, &c. &c. in all of which, it is too evident, that the grand design in view is that of trumpeting forth your own praises. Tedious and fulsome as this appears in the eyes of men of sense and judgment, yet a gentleman of Mr. Wesley's cunning and subtlety can, from hence, suck no small advantage, as there are multitudes amongst your own people, who, through a blind attachment to your person, and a no less blind zeal to promote your interests, look upon it as perfectly right and proper ; and are at all times, and upon all occasions, ready to pay the most implicit obedience to your *ipse dixits*, and to believe, or disbelieve, just as you would have them. But I have nothing to do with such bigots ; to endeavour to open their eyes by argument, would be as vain as to attempt to wash the *Æthiopian* white, or to change the leopard's spots. There are, however, many persons of good sense and true piety in your societies, who, in spite of all your artifices, begin to form a judgment of you according to facts. It is for the benefit of such persons, as well as to vindicate the memory of a departed

\* Notwithstanding this young woman might, in some instances, be under the influence of a spirit of enthusiasm, yet far be it from me to affirm, that the whole of her experience was a delusion. On the contrary, I am persuaded she was a sincere devoted Christian, and believe that she is now in heaven.



parted saint from your foul aspersions, that you are presented with this epistle; though I confess I was some time before I could bring myself to write or print it. I considered, that a misjudging, prejudiced world would be happy to take advantage from its contents, and to cry, "there, there, so would we have it;" "the methodists\* are all fallen together by the ears, and are discharging their artillery at one another." I considered again, that as to expose you was not my motive, so to bring you to any submission was never in human power. I had well nigh resolved to be silent. On the other hand, I perceived that the sealing testimony, which God vouchsafed to his own truths in the experience of Mr. Toplady, during his illness, and at the time of his death, was not only denied by you, but even construed into a gross imposition of his friends to deceive the public, and thereby the good effects which might justly have been hoped for, were in great measure counteracted; that his enemies were hardened against the truths he maintained, and so ably vindicated; and even his friends staggered by the shocking accounts forged and propagated: I say, when I saw this to be the case, I determined (to adopt an expression of your own) to "write and print." I said, let God be true, and every man a liar. If you make no reply, I cannot avoid construing your silence into an acquiescence of your being guilty of the matter brought against you. If you

\* I observed, upon a former occasion, that the name of Methodist, as it is indiscriminately given by way of reproach, to all who have more zeal for religion than is consistent with the fashion of the times, I have no desire to shake off; on the contrary, I would glory in it, as the badge which every real Christian is allotted to wear; and I would pray that I might deserve it much more than I do. But as it conveys the idea of an attachment to the tenets of Mr. Wesley, in opposition to the word of God, and to the doctrines of all the Protestant Churches, that of this nation in particular; in this view of it, I desire totally to renounce it.



you do "write and print" in answer, let me beg you, for once, to avoid quibbles and evasions.

I am, Rev. Sir,  
Your sincere well wisher, &c.

and most humble servant,

RICHARD HILL.

"We whose names are underwritten are willing to testify upon oath, if required, that all the particulars published to the world in the late Memoirs, relative to the illness and death of the late Rev. Augustus Montague Toplady, are strictly true; we ourselves having been eye and ear-witnesses of the same. And therefore we all heartily join the author of the foregoing letters, in calling upon Mr. John Wesley, to produce his authority for what he told to Mr. Thomas Robinson of Hilderthorp, the Rev. Mr. Greaves, and others, as specified in the letter.

Andrew Gifford, D.D. British Museum.

John Ryland, senior, Northampton.

\* Thomas Evans, Apothecary, Knightsbridge.

William Abington, Beaufort-buildings, Strand.

Thomas Hough, Surgeon, No. 3, Coventry-street.

William Cowley, Barbican.

John Cole, Upper Seymour-street, Portman-square.

Thomas Jarvis, Charing-cross.

Thomas Burgess, Mill-street, Hanover-square.

William Hussey, }  
Susanna Hussey, } Coventry-street.

† Elizabeth Sterling, Nurse.

James Matthews, No. 18, Strand.

It

\* Mr. Evans attended Mr. Toplady the whole time of his last illness until his death.

† Mrs. Elizabeth Sterling was the only nurse who attended Mr. Toplady until his death, and of course must be the person falsely charged by Mr. Wesley, to have joined his societies in consequence of his (Mr. Toplady's) awful departure. A charge equally false with all Mr. Wesley's other assertions.



It would be an unpardonable omission, not to take notice of the nervous reprehension Mr. Wesley received on his unjust assertions, by a pious dissenting minister, who expostulated with him, in a pamphlet, in the following words: \* “ Mr. Wesley, and his confederates, to whom this letter is addressed, did not only persecute the late Mr. Toplady, during his life, but even sprinkled his death-bed with abominable falsehood. It was given out, in most of Mr. Wesley’s societies, both far and near, that the worthy man had recanted and disowned the doctrines of sovereign grace, which obliged him, though struggling with death, to appear in the pulpit emaciated as he was, and openly avowed the doctrines he had preached, as the sole support of his departing spirit. Wretched must that cause be, which has need to be supported by such unmanly shifts, and seek for shelter under such disingenuous subterfuges. O! Mr. Wesley, answer for this conduct at the bar of the Supreme. Judge yourself, and you shall not be judged. Dare you also to persuade your followers, that Mr. Toplady actually died in despair? Fie upon sanctified slander! Fie! Fie!”

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*We here subjoin a Copy of the last Will and Testament of Mr. Toplady, ratified six months prior to his decease.*

IN THE NAME OF GOD, AMEN. I Augustus Montague Toplady, Clerk, Batchelor of Arts, and Vicar of the Parish and Parish-church of Broad-Hembury, in the county of Devon, and diocese of Exeter; being mindful of my mortality, (though, at present, in a competent state of bodily health, and

\* See a tract, entitled, “ The Foundery Budget Opened,” printed for Johnston, 1789, by the reverend Mr. Macgowan, author of the Shaver, Death a Vision, &c. &c.



and of perfect mind and memory) do make and declare this my last will and testament (all written with my own hand, and consisting of three folio pages), this twenty-eighth day of February, in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy Eight, in manner and form following: That is to say, First: I most humbly commit my soul to the hands of Almighty God; whom I know, and have long experienced, to be my ever-gracious and infinitely merciful Father. Nor have I the least doubt of my election, justification, and eternal happiness, through the riches of his everlasting and unchangeable kindness to me in Christ Jesus his co-equal Son; my only, my assured, and my all-sufficient Saviour: washed in whose propitiatory blood, and cloathed with whose imputed righteousness, I trust to stand perfect and sinless and complete, and do verily believe that I most certainly shall so stand, in the hour of death, and in the kingdom of heaven, and at the last judgment, and in the ultimate state of endless glory. Neither can I write this my last will without rendering the deepest, the most solemn, and the most ardent thanks, to the adorable Trinity in Unity, for their eternal, unmerited, irreversible, and inexhaustible love to me a sinner. I bless God the Father, for having written, from everlasting, my unworthy name in the Book of Life; even for appointing me to obtain salvation, through Jesus Christ my Lord. I adore God the Son, for his having vouchsafed to redeem me by his own most precious death; and for having obeyed the whole law, for my justification. I admire and revere the gracious benignity of God the Holy Ghost, who converted me, to the saving knowledge of Christ, more than two and twenty years ago, and whose enlightening, supporting, comforting, and sanctifying agency is, and (I doubt not) will be, my strength and my song, in the house of my earthly pilgrimage. Secondly: as to my body, I will and desire it may be interred in my chancel, within the

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parish



parish church of Broad Hembury, aforesaid, if I should be in Devonshire, or near to that county at the time of my death. But, in case I die at, or in the neighbourhood of London, or at any other considerable distance from Devonshire, let the place of my interment be, wheresoever my executor (hereinafter named) shall chuse and appoint; unless, in writing or by word of mouth, I should hereafter signify any particular spot for my place of burial. Thirdly: let me be buried where I may, my express will and desire is, that my grave be dug to the depth of nine feet, at the very least, from the surface of the ground; or (which would be still more agreeable to my will and desire) to the depth of twelve feet, if the nature of the soil should admit of it. I earnestly request my executor to see to the performance of this article, with particular care and exactness. Fourthly: my express will is, that my funeral expences may not, if possible, exceed the sum of twenty pounds sterling. Let no company be invited to my burial. Let no rings, scarves, hatbands, or mourning of any kind, be distributed. Let no funeral sermon be preached. Let no monument be erected.\* Fifthly: whatsoever worldly substance and effects I shall die possessed of, and whatsoever worldly substance and effects I may be entitled to, before, at, or after, the time of my decease, whether money, plate, china, books, coins and medals, paintings, linen, cloathes, furniture, and all other effects, of whatsoever kind, and to what amount soever, whether in town or country, at home or abroad, together with all arrears and dues of every sort, I do hereby give and bequeath the whole and every of them (excepting only such single sum, as shall be herein afterwards distinctly named and otherways disposed of) to my valuable and valued friend Mr. William Hussey, china and glass-dealer of Coventry-street, in the county of Middlesex, and parish of St. James's, in the liberty of

\* Some part of this was altered by his own verbal direction.



of Westminster; and who [*viz.* the said Mr. Wm. Hussey], when not resident in town, is likewise of Kensington-Gore in the said county of Middlesex, and parish of St. Margaret, Westminster. And I do hereby nominate, constitute, and appoint him, the said William Hussey, the whole and sole executor of this my last will and testament, and my whole and sole residuary legatee. Sixthly: my will is, that my effects, so left and bequeathed, as above-said, to the aforementioned William Hussey, shall be, and hereby are, charged with the payment of the clear and neat sum of one hundred and five pounds, good and lawful money of Great Britain, to Elizabeth Sterling, now or late of Snow's Fields, in or near the Borough of Southwark, in the county of Surry, spinster. Which said sum of one hundred and five pounds, lawful money of Great Britain, as aforesaid, I will and desire may be paid, clear and free of all deduction whatever, to the said Elizabeth Sterling, by my before-named executor, Mr. William Hussey, within three months, at farthest, after my decease; for and in consideration of the long and faithful services, rendered by her, the said Elizabeth Sterling, to my late dear and honoured mother, of ever-loved and revered memory. Seventhly: let all my manuscripts of what kind soever (I mean, all manuscripts of, and in my own hand-writing), be consumed by fire, within one week after my interment.\* Eighthly: whereas, it may seem mysterious that I leave and bequeath no testamentary memorial of my regard to any of my own relations, whether by blood or by alliance, and whether related to me by my father's side, or by my mother's, it may be proper just to hint my reasons. In the first place, I am greatly mistaken, if all my own relations be not superior

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to

\* This was revoked by his own desire, and left to the discretion of his executor; but it is to be lamented that a fortnight previous to his death, he burnt, with his own hands, a manuscript copy of the History of England, (which would have made three volumes 4to.,) because it had not received his own corrections.



to me, in point of worldly circumstances. And, secondly, as my said relations are rather numerous, I deem myself more than justified in passing them all by, and in not singling out one, or a few, in preference to the rest; especially seeing my good wishes are impartially divided among them all. Ninthly: with respect to many most valued and honoured persons, whose intimacy and friendship have so highly contributed to the happiness of my life, though not related to me by any family tie; these I likewise omit, as legatees: first, because they are, in general, abundantly richer than myself; and, secondly, because they too are so extremely numerous, both in town and country, that it is absolutely out of my power to bequeath, to each and every one of them, a substantial or very valuable memento of the respectful love which I bear to them in Christ our common Saviour! and to distinguish only some of them by legacies, might carry an implication of ingratitude to the rest.—In testimony of all which premises (and at the same time, utterly revoking, cancelling, annulling, and rescinding every and all other will or wills, by me heretofore made), I hereunto set my hand and seal, the day and year first above written, *viz.* Saturday, the twenty-eighth day of February; and in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy-eight; and of the reign of his majesty, King George the Third, the eighteenth year.

AUGUSTUS MONTAGUE TOPLADY. (L.S.)

Signed, declared, and published, as and for the last will and testament of him, the said Augustus Montague Toplady, in the presence of us, who subscribe our names in the testator's presence, and at his request.

JOHN BERNARD JUNTHER,  
THOMAS WILKS.

We



We have now exhibited with much diffidence the outlines of the distinguished character of him who is the subject of these memoirs, without any view either directly or obliquely, to set up or varnish the hypothesis, or the dogmas of a party. We have no connection whatever with any religious department. There is only one Master unto whom we bow and acknowledge implicit obedience, and unto whose doctrine and discipline we profess a cordial attachment. The religion of Jesus Christ, we take up as the only solid basis of truth, our guide and comfort through this world, our hope and support in death, and our felicity in an immortal state, to which we are hastening.

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*In order to rescue from oblivion the following small fragment which necessarily attends the destiny of some fugitive Pieces, and at the particular solicitations of a few friends, this Elegiac Poem on the Death of Mr. Toplady, written by Mr. John Fellows, is inserted,*

DESCEND, ye shining seraphs from on high  
 Ye, who with wonder and with praise survey  
 The great Redeemer's love to fallen man ;  
 Ye, who with ceaseless songs surround the throne  
 Of filial godhead, basking in the blaze  
 Of boundless glory ; ye, who burn with love  
 To all the saints ; and have, at Christ's command,  
 Oft joined in bright assemblage, and came down  
 From heaven's high summit thro' these lower skies,  
 To bear his sons triumphant to his throne ;  
 Descend ! and in full legion aid the flight  
 Of a fair saint, who now rejoicing lies  
 On death's cold verge : who, in his God's embrace,  
 Smiling resigns his mortal breath, and stands  
 On love's strong pinions ready to ascend.  
 Salvation to the Lamb who once was slain !  
 Dominion, glory, majesty, and praise !  
 Unerring wisdom shines, and boundless might  
 In all his deeds. By his almighty power  
 He hath disarm'd the monster of his sting,  
 And tyrant death is now a conquer'd foe.



Wide as the sound of mighty seas, let all  
The heavenly multitudes begin the song.  
Let all the skies with hallelujahs ring :

And each angelic harp resound his praise:

Thus as AUGUSTUS yielded up his breath  
And smiling sunk into his Saviour's arms,  
His guardian angel sang. Mean while a train  
Of mighty cherubs, by heaven's King's command  
Assembled, wait the signal to descend,  
And bring the saint in triumph thro' the skies.  
Michael, the chief of the angelic hosts,  
With Gabriel, the fast friend of all the heirs  
Of glory, now commanded : The glad chiefs  
Prepare their trophies, and with heavenly pomp  
Worthy the great occasion, swift descend  
Thro' the pure æther. All the shining train  
With strong immortal pinions cleave the skies.  
Michael the prince, before the troop descends,  
Exulting thus to friendly Gabriel spake :

*Michael.* Gabriel behold with what extatic joy  
Our favoured train receive the high command  
To fetch AUGUSTUS to the climes of bliss !  
With eager haste each cherubim proceeds ;  
Fix'd to the chariot stand the steeds of fire,  
Which beat with burning hoofs the sounding plain,  
And snorting toss on high their beamy heads  
Reluctant to the rein. The fervid wheels  
Instinct with spirit, and with love inspir'd  
Burn for the course. Each cherub waves his shield,  
And claps his wings impatient of delay.

*Gabriel.* If any thing can add to heavenly bliss,  
Or give new relish to the boundless joys  
We feel in doing our great Maker's will,  
It is the holy pleasure which expands  
Our glowing hearts, when from the lower world  
We bear on high Immanuel's ransom'd sons,  
The chosen object of his early love :  
But when we bring to his eternal hill  
Those who have labour'd in his righteous cause,  
And have each glorious gospel truth maintain'd  
Against the rage of Sion's numerous foes,  
Our joys are greater : And these earthly stars  
We bear to heavenly heights and set to shine  
In brighter skies. But see, the signal made  
For our departure ! Down the steep of heaven  
As swift as light, ye legions bear away !

*Michael.* Here ! this way lies our course ! Behold yon star  
Which feebly glimmers thro' the distant void ;  
And scarce to angel's sight appears in view.  
This is the sun that fills the lower skies  
With light and heat ; and hath successive years



Pour'd from his burning throne the blazing day  
Which cheers the world where the Redeemer bled.  
A world, where horrid guilt outrageous reigns,  
And black rebellion seeks to storm the skies:  
Where haughty man, the lord of all the globe,  
Presumes with daring insolence t'arraign  
The conduct of his Maker; break his law,  
And disbelieve his word. A world where hell's  
Black horrid king in ceaseless tumult reigns,  
Fomenting rage, and cruelty, and war,  
In all their horrid forms; and every vice  
So hateful and abhorr'd, that heavenly lips  
Disdain to mention; but for this devote  
To ample vengeance, at th' appointed day  
When she shall burn by heaven's awakened ire,  
And God in thunder vindicate his law.

*Gabriel.* Yet in this world, such is the sovereign will  
Of heaven's dread Monarch, and his high decree,  
The sons of grace and heirs of glory dwell.  
Here they are kept at distance from his throne,  
And from surrounding evils safe preserv'd  
By powerful grace; and here they undergo  
Such discipline as trains them for the skies.  
On their account it is that vengeance stays,  
And heaven's rich blessings crown this wicked world  
In wide profusion. When the last of all  
The ransom'd race hath pass'd the gates of death,  
Almighty vengeance, like a flood, will burst  
From heaven's high throne, and wrap the world in fire.

*Michael.* These are the objects of his choice regard,  
Whom the bright natives of the sky adore,  
Who once was dead, but lives and reigns for ever.  
He keeps them in his eye; his power supports  
In every trouble. At the hour of death  
His arms receive them; and his guards he sends  
In shining squadrons, his cherubic guards  
To fetch them to his throne.

*Gabriel.* This is the cause,  
The joyful cause which wings our present flight.  
Nor is a common saint our precious charge;  
But one whose love and labours well are known  
On heavenly ground. How often have his prayers  
Ardent ascended thro' thick night, and burn'd  
Like grateful incense, which heaven's king receiv'd  
With pleasing smiles which bright'ned all the sky.

*Michael.* How oft, amongst the happy sons of light,  
Hath the Redeemer spoke his servant's praise;  
And, smiling, held him up to heavenly view,  
As a defender of his righteous cause?  
Mention'd his labours, and his holy zeal  
With approbation: and enjoin'd the throng



Of listening cherubs to adorn their harps  
 With flowery garlands, and prepare new songs  
 Against the joyful, th' appointed day  
 Which brings him to the skies !

*Gabriel.*

How oft with joy  
 And holy wonder hath the ardent train  
 Of warrior angels, when from earth's low plains  
 They brought some precious saint to heavenly heights,  
 And taught their unfledg'd wings to scale the skies ;  
 Heard them relate, how from their native night  
 And heavy slumber on the brink of hell,  
 They were awoke to see their dreadful state,  
 And sue for mercy, by the mighty power  
 Of sovereign grace, which to their hearts apply'd  
 Some powerful portion dropping from the lips  
 Of that dear servant of the Lord, who now  
 Demands the care of our surrounding shields,  
 Our swiftest pinions and our sweetest songs.

*Michael.* And with what transport have we often heard,

As we ascended thro' the trackless void  
 With some fair charge, how the Redeemer's love  
 Was first display'd to cheer their drooping hearts  
 By some sweet words, which heavenly power apply,  
 Warm from the heart and flowing from the lips  
 Of this dear man ! How have the saints been warn'd  
 Not to erect their building on the sand,  
 But on th' eternal rock, which all hell's powers  
 Can never shake ! How have their doubts been clear'd  
 By the full blaze of heavenly truth ! How were  
 Their minds enlighten'd, comforted, upheld  
 By his instructions ! With what fervent praise  
 Have they approach'd the great Redeemer's throne,  
 And, safe on heavenly ground, have bless'd the day  
 When first they sat attentive at his feet  
 And heard his words !

*Gabriel.*

'Tis true, he was indeed  
 A burning and a shining light ; set up  
 By heavenly power to lead the ransom'd race  
 Safe thro' the darkness which o'ershades the land.  
 The heights of science in his youth he gain'd,  
 And with a rapid course explor'd th' extent  
 Of learning's province. Then, by powerful grace,  
 Call'd out, and to his Saviour's vineyard sent,  
 His ardent soul, inspir'd with love divine,  
 Pour'd all her faculties and all her strength  
 Into the noble work : and all her powers  
 Burn'd to display a bleeding Saviour's love,  
 And teach a wond'ring world Immanuel's praise.

*Michael.* The great Redeemer's glories to reveal,  
 And make the saints more ready to embrace  
 A free salvation, 'twas his constant care



To shew the wretched state of native man.  
How from the bitter fountain of the fall,  
In every stream, the dire pollution runs.  
Corrupt and wicked all the rising race  
Of Adam stands. Not one but in his heart  
Dares to withstand his Maker's sov'reign will,  
And all his father in his soul rebels.  
For this devote to death each sinner stands,  
And heavy vengeance hangs o'er all the race ;  
Which none escape but through a Saviour's blood.

*Gabriel.* But with what holy extasy and joy  
Did wond'ring crowds hang on the precious lips,  
Of the dear saint for whom we now descend ;  
While in his powerful, soul-affecting strain  
The great Redeemer in full glory rose !  
How glow'd each heart with joy while he display'd  
His glorious person, his amazing love,  
His great salvation, his victorious deeds,  
And pardon preach'd to sinners thro' his blood.

*Michael.* How did the skies with acclamations ring,  
When new ascended souls on heavenly plains  
Beneath the trees of life, were heard relate  
To listening angels, in what powerful strain  
He spake the glories of th' incarnate God ;  
And the exalted Lord of life display'd  
In the full blaze of Deity supreme :  
Ador'd, as such, by all the happy throng  
Of saints and angels, while he fills the skies  
With boundless glory.—Hence, ye impious throng !  
Whose darken'd minds and eyes unus'd to light,  
Ache at the glories of the Son of God.  
Ye, whose bold pride presumes such daring heights  
As would degrade the sovereign of the skies ;  
And will not worship at the glorious throne  
Where every bright archangel veils his face,  
And falls with deepest reverence. But, vain man  
Would fain be wise ; and in his native filth  
Boldly rush in where angels dare not tread,  
And make a god himself can comprehend !

*Gabriel.* And with what clearness did the pious saint,  
Whose voice on earth will now be heard no more,  
Display the glories and the mighty power  
Of Sovereign Grace ! Not by the will of man,  
He plainly shew'd, but the all-conquering might  
Of God the Spirit, is each sinner call'd.  
'Tis his resistless power that first begins,  
Maintains, and thro' each stage he carries on  
The noble work ; prevailing o'er the filth  
Of ruin'd nature, 'till it stand complete  
In heavenly glory. All the ransom'd race,  
Safe-guided thro' the wilderness, shall find

Their



Their Father's house. Not one of all the train  
 Shall ever perish. All the powers of hell,  
 Tho' all their rage unite against one saint,  
 Can never pluck him from his Saviour's arms.  
 But sinful man, such is his native pride,  
 Would fain be sharer in this noble work;  
 Of his own doings a proud structure raise,  
 And from its summit boldly mount the skies.  
 But heaven, with anger, views the impious toil  
 Of all such builders; mocks their vain attempts,  
 O'erturns their boasted fabrics in its ire,  
 "And buries madmen in the heaps they raise."

*Michael.* How great the folly of mistaken man,  
 To think his works are worthy to appear  
 On heavenly ground! Who hopes to share the praise  
 Of his salvation; and with dirty feet  
 Would dare pollute the bright transparent stream  
 Of love divine; which, from th' eternal throne,  
 Flows pure and clear, and in this lower world  
 Streams like a fountain thro' a Saviour's blood.  
 But will not with the muddy waters mix  
 Which rise from nature's fountain.

*Gabriel.* Whether pride,  
 Or stupid folly in mistaken man,  
 Most calls for censure, is a puzzling question  
 No angel can resolve. How much of each  
 They all betray, when they presume to rise  
 Against the glories of a sovereign God,  
 Who sits enthron'd, amidst the boundless blaze  
 Of uncreated brightness, and that light  
 No mortal can behold! He from his throne  
 At one vast comprehensive view beholds  
 The universe, and all created things,  
 Past, present, and to come. How oft have we,  
 And all the heavenly multitude retir'd  
 With trembling awe, while the eternal King  
 Hath in surrounding darkness veil'd his throne;  
 And not the tall archangel durst presume  
 To pry into the secrets of his reign!  
 But man, vain man! can boldly dare to blame,  
 Oppose and contradict his high decree:  
 In his own narrow limits would confine  
 Eternal love, nor give heaven's Sovereign leave  
 To chuse amongst his creatures whom he will,  
 And bring the happy objects of his choice  
 Safe to his throne by his almighty power,  
 Because proud man can see no reason why.

*Michael.* But see the world to which we wing our way  
 Appears in view. Behold the clouded sphere  
 Of earth and water form'd. The darker parts  
 Are spacious seas; the lighter solid land,



The seat of man. See, in triangular form  
Great Britain rise, and swell upon the sight.  
Here, in full peace, the heirs of glory dwell,  
And sit beneath the gospel's joyful sound.  
And from this favour'd land each day we bring  
Numbers of shining saints, and bear on high  
To people all the skies.

*Gabriel.* What cause for praise  
Hath every native of this happy land !  
Happy ! thrice happy ! knew they how to prize  
Each precious privilege which they enjoy,  
Since their deliverance from th' oppressive power,  
And purple tyranny of haughty Rome.  
But, cold and careless grown, they sit supine,  
And her ungrateful sons behold the place,  
Without emotion, where their fathers bled :  
And, fearless now, they with the serpent play,  
By whose deceitful wiles, and bloody rage,  
A world hath smarted.

*Michael.* See, the tools of Rome  
With demons join'd, how cunningly they hide  
Their base designs ! How, in the dark, they work,  
And on unwary and unstable minds  
Too much prevail ; while, like a lamb they paint  
The papal monarch ! but if once he rear  
His bloody standard, this revolted land  
Will hear him like a dreadful lion roar :  
And late by sad experience, will be taught  
That the old dragon has not lost his sting.

*Gabriel.* And now to bring about her base designs,  
See, how the fraud of Rome hath undermin'd  
The British Counsels ! for the land declines  
In strength and glory, while the sword of war  
She hath, by madness urg'd, and cruel rage,  
In her own bowels plung'd \*.

*Michael.* But see, we stand  
On earthly ground, and at our journey's end.  
Just rising from the frozen arms of death,  
And from the chains of matter now broke loose  
Our charge appears. His guardian angel smiles  
To see our squadron. Not unknown he views  
Each cherub's features ; and presumes the cause  
For which we left the skies.

*Guardian Angel.* Hail ! ye bright train  
Of happy angels ! welcome to the land  
Where great Immanuel trains his chosen sons  
For boundless glory ! And, when fit to rise,  
Having perform'd his holy work and will,  
Sends his bright guards to bear them to his throne.

Such

\* This Poem was written during the American war. EDITOR.



Such is the cause which brings you now from heaven.  
 With ardent joy I your assembly join,  
 And to your care commit my precious charge,  
 Who burns with heavenly love, and longs to rise  
 With you to worship, and to join your songs.

*Gabriel.* Sing, all ye seraphs, the deserved praise  
 Of our incarnate God! who reigns on high  
 And dwells amidst the unutterable blaze  
 Of uncreated light. Him all the skies,  
 With awful reverence, and with holy joy,  
 Adore and praise: and his immortal deeds  
 Will find fresh matter for our soaring songs,  
 When we, assembled, sit on heavenly hills;  
 Nor can eternal ages e'er exhaust  
 The boundless theme. Salvation to the Lamb!  
 Immortal glory, honour, power and praise,  
 Are justly his! He triumphs over death,  
 The yawning grave, and all the powers of hell.

*Soul.* What songs are these which charm my wond'ring mind,  
 And fill with growing joy, unknown before!  
 What stream of heavenly harmony is this  
 Which breathes my welcome to the immortal shores!  
 And sings the triumphs of the mighty God  
 Whom all my ardent spirit burns to see.  
 Say, ye bright natives of the heavenly land,  
 Who in transcendent glory shine around;  
 Who cheer me with your condescending smiles,  
 And fire me with your songs! for I perceive  
 You also worship at Immanuel's throne,  
 And all your heavenly harps resound his praise.  
 Tell me! Oh, tell me, for my vigorous powers  
 Burn to behold my Saviour and my God.  
 Where shall I find him? which way thro' the sky  
 Lies my long journey? Or will you, bless'd train!  
 Permit me with your squadron to ascend,  
 And learn the way to the Redeemer's throne?

*Michael.* Yes, happy saint! we come at the command  
 Of heaven's Supreme, from his eternal hill;  
 And a bright chariot bring with steeds of fire,  
 To bear thee up in triumph thro' the sky,  
 And lodge thee in thy dearest Lord's embrace.  
 For know, thy labours and thy ardent love  
 Are not in heaven unknown: nor will they fail  
 To find their full reward. The heavy toil  
 Thou hast sustain'd, and now remains the rest,  
 Thine are the bliss, the glory, and the joy.

*Soul.* But say, bright armies of the heavenly King!  
 Whose condescending love brings you so far  
 From your bless'd home; for strange it seems to me  
 You on such errand should forsake the sky;  
 What need is there of this amazing pomp?  
 Or why should your bright legions take such care



Of one that's most unworthy ? while the praise  
Of the Redeemer claims your ceaseless songs ;  
And the great King who fills th' eternal throne  
Your constant worship ?

*Michael.*

Think not heaven so thin

Of happy natives, or th' eternal throne  
So slightly guarded, but the Lord of all  
Can numbers spare to fetch his chosen sons.  
Nor think the blessed objects of his choice  
So little honour'd by the sons of heaven  
That we should be unwilling to bestow  
Such tokens of respect as our great King  
Commands. Nor would the brightness of our train  
Employ thy wonder, had thine eyes beheld  
The various beauties of the heavenly land,  
The boundless glory of th' eternal throne,  
And the transcendent grandeur of the courts  
Of our exalted King !

*Gabriel.*

Blest soul ! thy need

Of our cherubic guards, thou wilt perceive  
Far greater than at present may appear.  
Thro' the vast trackless void thy journey lies,  
And great the distance from this world to heaven.  
Thy unexperienced flight might miss the way,  
And far aside explore with devious wing  
The dreary waste. Besides, th' apostate crew  
Of wicked spirits, whose dominion lies  
Between the earthly and th' etherial plains,—  
These, though they could not wound, might much annoy,  
And want not malice to attempt their worst.  
They, by their arts, might shake the trembling air  
With mimic thunders ; and their lightnings play  
Full in thy face ; while with delusive powers  
They raise around thee various horrid forms  
To shock thy peace and make thy courage fail.

*Michael.*—Or, if these airy terrors miss'd their end,  
And still unmov'd thou couldst thy flight maintain ;  
They might assume the drapery of the skies,  
Array'd in light, attract thy wond'ring view,  
And seem bright cherubs to thy erring sight.  
Then bold delusive scenes of pleasure draw,  
Green shades and silver fountains might be seen,  
And heavenly music seem to charm thine ear ;  
But all deceitful tending to ensnare,  
And lead thee far away from real joy.

*Gabriel.*—These are their arts, but, of our power afraid,  
They tremble when our squadrons come in view.  
For heavenly glories shock their aching sight,  
And gloomy, murmuring, they in haste retire,  
Howl o'er the waste, and shelter in their dens.

*Soul.*—What reason have I then to love and praise  
The great Redeemer ! Who to guard me safe

Thro'



Thro' every danger, sends his winged train  
 Of warrior angels to protect my flight.  
 And you, bright heavenly messengers, demand  
 My warmest gratitude—But let's ascend !  
 My spirit burns to mount the bless'd abodes,  
 To join your praises, learn your noblest songs,  
 And worship with you at Immanuel's throne.  
 Adieu ! my dearest brethren and my friends,  
 Whom heavenly providence had made my charge ;  
 Whose souls I watched for with unceasing care  
 Both day and night : and, to my utmost power,  
 As grace assisted and occasion serv'd,  
 Labour'd to fix you on the rock of ages,  
 And build you up in every gospel truth.  
 Mourn not for me ! but rather lift your eyes  
 To where the great Redeemer lives and reigns.  
 He can repair your every loss, and give  
 Such portions of his spirit as may fill  
 Your ardent souls with heavenly love and joy.  
 Your teachers die, but your Redeemer lives !  
 Shout, all ye saints ! your Jesus lives for ever !

*Guardian Angel.*—Now, happy soul, thy painful labours end,  
 And thou art rising far above the reach  
 Of all that would disturb, or wound thy peace.  
 Thine, and the gospel's foes, may strive in vain  
 With falsehood and deceit to blast thy name ;  
 They cannot hurt thy Master's cause, nor thee.

*Chorus of Angels.*—Now we ascend, and thro' the skies proclaim,  
 Glory to God ! Salvation to the Lamb !  
 Him all the armies of the sky adore :  
 We sing his boundless goodness as we soar :  
 His glories shine thro' all the heavenly plains ;  
 Thy God, O Israel ! thy Redeemer reigns !

FINIS.



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N. B. The above eight articles are from the pen of Mr. Toplady.



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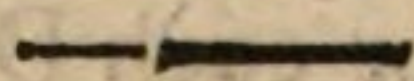
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2



the true gospel will be of vast importance, namely, the hour of death. How shall we feel at that awful period? How will these doctrines then affect us? How many while living have opposed them—but ah!—how glad to hear of them at death. “*Truth is deposited with man’s last hour!*”

AMICUS.

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*An Original Letter from the Rev. Mr. TOPLADY to the  
Rev. Mr. HUDDLESTON.*

REV. SIR,

**T**HIS waits upon you from a Devonshire Rector, whom you once knew, and who once was happy in knowing you. Your old friend has wrote you a pretty many letters, but his correspondent thinks it, I suppose, beneath the dignity of so high a proficient in the new divinity of Professor Sandiman, to give even an answer to a poor dull Undergraduate, who hardly knows the A B C of Christianity. But, on second thoughts, I beg your pardon, Rev. Sir, for calling your system of divinity, a *new* one. It is as old as popery. It is of some hundred years standing. The Scotch Sectarian, on whose infallible sleeve you wisely pin your faith, drew his leading principle from Antichrist; the mystery of whose iniquity began to work even in the apostolic age. Nor has it done working yet. Alas, it has wrought upon my friend: the last person, almost, whom I should have thought capable of so foul a seduction.

Indeed, I can rally you no longer. The remembrance of what you was, melts me into tears, when I consider what you are. Can you forget the days and months that are past? Can you, in earnest, despise as folly, and abjure as delusion, that comfortable, that sweet experience of special grace, with which I have reason to believe, you was favoured some years ago? O come back, come back, to the religion of the gospel. Away with the Tridentine doctrine. Fling it to the moles and to the bats. Leave it to its proper owners, the Papists, the Arminians and the Sandimonians. Beg of God that the spirit may be poured upon you from on high, and, after enlightening your judgment, that he would restore to you those consolations, which, I once thought, were the joy of your heart; and enable you again to sing that heavenly song, the language of elect souls, “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in *my* God: for he hath clothed *me* with the garments of salvation, he hath covered *me* with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom,” &c.

Little























Memoirs of Augustus Toplady, late Vicar of Broad Hamburg Devon

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